

Florin Japanese American Citizens League
Oral History Project

Oral History Interview

With

KUNI KUNIMI HIRONAKA

May 29, 1991
Sacramento, California

By Kinya Noguchi

Florin Japanese American Citizens League
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California State University, Sacramento
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JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

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PREFACE

In the summer of 1987, a small group of people from the Florin JACL met at Mary and Al Tsukamoto's home to plan a new project for the organization. Because of the unique history of Florin, we felt that there were special stories that needed to be preserved. The town of Florin, California was once a thriving farming community with a large Japanese American population. The World War II internment of persons of Japanese ancestry living on the west coast, devastated the town and it never recovered. Today there is no town of Florin; it has been merged into the larger county of Sacramento. Many Japanese Americans who reside throughout the United States, however, have their origins from Florin, or have relatives and friends who once had ties to this community. The town may no longer exist, but the spirit of the community continues to survive in people's hearts and memories.

Several hours have been devoted to interviewing former Florin residents. The focus of the interviews was on the forced internment and life in the relocation camps, but our questions touched on other issues. We asked about their immigration to the United States from Japan, pre-war experiences, resettlement after the war and personal philosophies. We also wanted to record the stories of the people left behind. They were friends and neighbors who watched in anguish as the trains transported the community away.

We have conducted these interviews with feelings of urgency. If we are to come away with lessons from this historic tragedy, we must listen to and become acquainted with the people who were there. Many of these historians are in their 70's, 80's and 90's. We are grateful that they were willing to share their experiences and to answer our questions with openness and thoughtfulness.

We owe special thanks to James F. Carlson, former Assistant Dean of American River College and to Jackie Reinier, former Director of the Oral History Program at California State University in Sacramento. Without their enthusiasm, encouragement and expertise, we never could have produced this collection of oral histories. We also wish to acknowledge the project members, volunteers, the Florin JACL which contributed financial support, Sumitomo Bank for their corporate donation, and the Taisho Young Mens Association which contributed some of their assets as they dissolved their corporation on December 31, 1991.

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INTERVIEW HISTORY

Interviewer

Mr. Kuni Kunimi Hironaka.

Interview Time and Place

May 29, 1991

Home of Kuni and Rose Hironaka, 890 Royal Green Way, Sacramento,
California 95831

The interview was conducted by Kinya Noguchi

Editing

Lori Kojima transcribed the taped interview.

Kuni and Rose Hironaka checked the verbatim manuscript of the interview against the original tape recordings, edited for punctuation, paragraphing, and spelling, verified proper names and added material, which is enclosed in brackets.

Tapes and Interview Records

Copies of bound transcript and the tapes will be held by Florin Japanese American Citizens League and in the University Archives at The Library, California State University, Sacramento, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, California, 95819. The draft transcript edited by the Asoo family is also located in the University Archives at The Library, California State University, Sacramento.

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

At the turn of the 20th century, Kuni's father, Kiyoichi Hironaka, made his arduous journey to the United States from Yamaguchi-ken, Japan. After arriving in San Francisco, he made his way to a place called Brighton, California. There, he went to work in the orchards as a farm laborer. Kiyoichi Hironaka, who was already married, was joined by his wife, Satsu, in 1913, and they had eight children, five boys and three girls. She left behind their oldest son in Japan. The next boys were twins but tragically, one or the twins died of pneumonia. Kuni's two surviving sisters and two brothers reside in California.

During the next several years, the Hironaka family spent their lives in Perkins. While attending school, Kuni and his sisters and brothers did not encounter any racial discrimination from their fellow students. Just prior to the war, Kuni became ill, and was diagnosed as having tuberculosis, and was transferred to Weimar Sanitarium in Auburn, California. During the war, the Hironaka family was evacuated from Pinedale Assembly Center, and later to Poston, Arizona until the fall of 1945.

Kuni's oral interview is an epic story of a 21 year old, separated from his family. He observed the changes taking place at Weimar and watched the fences around Weimar being changed. The upper portion of the barbed wire was now turned in. He challenged the change but did not get a satisfactory answer from the hospital director. It wasn't until the 80's, after much research by Kuni, that the change was ordered by the WRA because of the Japanese patients at Weimar.

Kuni stated that during his stay, another patient, a Norwegian, found out Kuni was Japanese and wanted to hurt him. There were no other incidents during his stay at Weimar. After the war, Kuni was reunited with the Hironaka family. The home owned by his father was occupied by an elderly white lady but caught fire, and the Hironaka family had to move into their barn.

Kuni enrolled in a rehabilitation class at Sacramento Junior College, and later went to work at McClellan Field. He married a lovely person, Rose Asoo, and had four children, David, Amy, Arlene, and Richard.

The true grit of a man, Kuni again after going to work at McClellan Field, noticed that under affirmative action, most of the promotions went to the Hispanic and Black employees. He brought this matter before his supervisor, and not getting a positive answer or action, challenged the base commander. He later challenged the Department of Defense. In the final analysis, he won the battle of David and Goliath. He even sacrificed his own promotion. This significant action led to the affirmative action treatment for Asian Americans throughout the Federal employment system. Kuni worked 34 years at McClellan Air Force Base.

Kuni has been an active member of the Sacramento JACL for forty years. President of the Bocho Doshi Kai (Yamaguchi Kenjin Kai) since 1986, and served on the board of South Sacramento Shinwa Kai for the past forty-five years. Kuni served as president of the South Tanoshimi Kai which meets weekly. In conjunction with his South Tanoshimi Kai involvement, he is a past president and current vice-president for the Project Council of the County Senior Nutrition Services program. He currently serves on the advisory committee for Agency for the Aging, a federal agency which gives advice on the welfare of senior citizens. He served on the Affirmative Action Committee of the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, and on the Consumers Advisory Board of PG&E. He also served on the Committee for Internment Credit. This group's efforts resulted in the passage of a law allowing Federal Civil Service Credit for federal employees who were interned during World War II.

Kuni is an active member of Parkview Presbyterian Church, a charter member of Nisei in Retirement, past president and current member of the Tsubaki Dance Club, and secretary for the Old Timer's Nisei Bowling League, a position he held for over 25 years. He served on the Board of Directors for the Sacramento Nisei Bowling Association since 1945, and was on the Executive Committee for the two National Bowling Nisei Bowling tournaments.

He serves on Congressman Robert T. Matsui's Executive Committee, fund-raiser committee, and is a Volunteer Coordinator for all his mailers. Kuni is a very devoted family person, and still has time to baby-sit and spend time with his 7 grandchildren. All of his grandchildren, grandnieces, and grandnephews adore him.

Kuni is a very unique person. He is a very dedicated, warm and compassionate individual with a vision. As I complete the final chapter of his oral interview, he continues to serve the Nikkei Community. It was indeed a pleasure to interview him, tell his story, and be able to preserve it in our oral history project for the next generation to read about Kuni Hironaka and his contributions to our community.

NOGUCHI: This is an oral history program center for the California State University Study with the Florin Japanese American Citizen's Oral History Project. This evening I am at the home of Kuni Hironaka, 890 Royal Green Avenue, Sacramento, California. The date is May 29, 1991.

NOGUCHI: For the record, Kuni, can you give me your full name please?

HIRONAKA: Kuni Kunimi Hironaka.

NOGUCHI: We will start with some of the things that we normally do on these interviews. We like to have names of your family, names of your parents, and your grandparents, if they were here in the United States.

HIRONAKA: My father's name is Kiyoichi Hironaka and my mother's name is Satsu Hironaka.

NOGUCHI: What part of Japan were they from?

HIRONAKA: They are from Yamaguchi-ken, Iwakunishi-shi, Japan.

NOGUCHI: What year did they come to the United States? Do you remember?

HIRONAKA: I am not sure. I am not too sure.

NOGUCHI: It must be quite some time.

HIRONAKA: Yes. My wild guess is, I think, my father came about 1903 and my

mother around 1913.

NOGUCHI: 1913. So, your dad came from Yamaguchi-ken to Perkins? Or did he come to some other place besides Perkins?

HIRONAKA: Ah . . .

NOGUCHI: Do you recall the town?

HIRONAKA: Best to my recollection, they came to a little town between Perkins and the Sacramento city limit. The place called Brighton.

NOGUCHI: Oh. Brighton. Did they go directly from Japan to San Francisco to Brighton? Do you remember?

HIRONAKA: As far as I know, yes.

NOGUCHI: Did your father go back to Japan to get married or had he made other arrangements to marry?

HIRONAKA: He was already married before he came, so my father came first and my mother joined him later.

NOGUCHI: How many children did they have?

HIRONAKA: There were five boys and three girls.

NOGUCHI: Quite a large family, wasn't it? When your dad arrived at Perkins or the Brighton area, what did he do?

HIRONAKA: Best of my recollection, he was a foreman for the Cutter Brothers Orchard in Brighton, California. It had approximately 200 acres of fruit trees and almond.

NOGUCHI: Were there any other Japanese people in Brighton when he arrived? Do you recall?

HIRONAKA: No. I am not sure. There were other families in that area, like the Takeuchi's.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: Mendas.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: Kuroda's, Mametsuka's, Kuwabara's, Takai's.

NOGUCHI: So, there were quite a few Japanese families when he came.

HIRONAKA: Right.

NOGUCHI: Was your father one of the first ones there or one of those that came after among the names of people that you mentioned?

HIRONAKA: That is hard to say. I would say, probably, he was one of the first ones there.

NOGUCHI: How old was he when he came? Was he a young man or was he a teenager?

HIRONAKA: No, he was a young man, in his early 20's.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh. Did anyone else come with him?

HIRONAKA: I am not too sure.

NOGUCHI: Did he have any brothers and sisters?

HIRONAKA: Not that I know of.

NOGUCHI: He was the only one from his family that came to the United States?

HIRONAKA: Yes, he was the only one from his family that came to the United States.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: There were some relatives that went to Hawaii, but I don't know if anyone came to the United States on his side.

NOGUCHI: So, he went to work for a Caucasian family?

HIRONAKA: Right.

NOGUCHI: Who was the oldest one in the family?

HIRONAKA: The oldest one is my brother, Yoshito Hironaka, but he is deceased.

NOGUCHI: And where is he now? Oh, he is deceased. I see.

HIRONAKA: My brother, Mitsugi and Moriyuki. They are twin brothers.

NOGUCHI: Oh, they are twins!

HIRONAKA: Right.

NOGUCHI: Where is Moriyuki now?

HIRONAKA: Moriyuki, he passed away too.

NOGUCHI: Oh, he passed away too. How did he die?

HIRONAKA: Pneumonia.

NOGUCHI: Oh!

HIRONAKA: About age five.

NOGUCHI: Oh! Age five!

HIRONAKA: They had one deceased before. Stillborn or whatever. I don't recollect

seeing him at all.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh. And Tsuto is the youngest one?

HIRONAKA: He is the youngest of the boys.

NOGUCHI: You have two sisters?

HIRONAKA: Three sisters. Yukie, Tayeko, and Teruko.

NOGUCHI: Do they all live in the area? The three sisters?

HIRONAKA: Ah. Yes. Yes.

NOGUCHI: And your brothers and sisters and brothers-in-law?

HIRONAKA: Yes.

NOGUCHI: Did your oldest brother ever go to Japan?

HIRONAKA: He was born there.

NOGUCHI: He was born in Japan?

HIRONAKA: He was born in Japan and came to join us. That was between, I would say, somewhere between 1915 and 1920.

NOGUCHI: Oh! Oh! So, your parents were married in Japan and they had a first son in Japan and left him there until they had him brought over.

HIRONAKA: Right.

NOGUCHI: Oh . . . I see. Did your father take an active part in the Japanese community of the Brighton area?

HIRONAKA: Yes. He was active in the Brighton Japanese school.

NOGUCHI: Oh. And was he active in the Sacramento Buddhist Church and also the

Yamaguchi Kenjin Kai? [also known as Bocho Doshi Kai]

HIRONAKA: Yes!

NOGUCHI: What year did he pass away?

HIRONAKA: I guess it was 1966.

NOGUCHI: 1966. It was quite some time ago.

HIRONAKA: Right.

NOGUCHI: And your mom?

HIRONAKA: Oh, she passed away in 1975.

NOGUCHI: Oh. '75. What were your feelings when the war broke out?

HIRONAKA: Well, it was hard to believe there was a war between Japan and the United States.

NOGUCHI: What was the reaction of the people in that area? Did they have fear and talk about it? Did your parents say anything as to how they felt?

HIRONAKA: No. Oh, my experiences with them were just after the war. And my experiences were kind of a mixed feeling, because when the Japanese were supposed to be evacuated, I was in the sanitarium in Weimar.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh. How did you feel when they had to go?

HIRONAKA: I felt we were deprived of our rights. We are the citizens of this country and we didn't do anything wrong. Yet, the families were taken away to camp.

NOGUCHI: Did you feel sad to be left behind like that?

HIRONAKA: Well, yes.

NOGUCHI: How did you feel when they were going to leave?

HIRONAKA: Kind of a lonesome feeling, but at the same time, there was not much you could do about it. I tried to make the best of the situation.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh. How long were you in the sanitarium prior to the start of the war?

HIRONAKA: I was there since . . . let me see. . . I was there around three or four months before the war started.

NOGUCHI: Oh, before the war started. So, you really felt like, kind of left behind, huh? Kind of a lonesome feeling.

HIRONAKA: Right.

NOGUCHI: Get that lonesome feeling that your family is being taken away from their roots there and you are being left alone to face what is not too familiar.

HIRONAKA: Right. Yes.

NOGUCHI: Were you the only one there?

HIRONAKA: No. There were a few Japanese there. There was one Japanese guy. His name is Hiroshi Tsutsui. Ah, he was really sad.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: And he couldn't leave because he had tuberculosis.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: It was really sad because he had tuberculosis. He was going to be sent to

a private sanitarium with this father's financial help to take care of his sickness.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: Then they told him he could not do that because his father was in the camp.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: He wondered why, so I had to tell him even his brothers had to go. In fact, everybody. He says, "How come? They are American citizens and they haven't done anything wrong. I haven't heard of anyone doing anything wrong. How come they are all put in camp? My brothers are American citizens too." Hiroshi couldn't understand why they had to go.

NOGUCHI: So, how old was this person you were talking to? Was he younger than you?

HIRONAKA: Yes. He was younger. He was about 16 or 17.

NOGUCHI: He really didn't understand, but you understood, so he was asking you. So, he kind of looked up to you?

HIRONAKA: Right. But, unfortunately, he passed on.

NOGUCHI: Oh, he passed away?

HIRONAKA: Yes. He did pass on a short time later.

NOGUCHI: During this time, how did the staff, the medical staff and personnel treat you? Did they treat you any different as compared to prior to the war?

HIRONAKA: No. Individually, one to one, they treated me really well. As far as I was treated, I was treated really well.

NOGUCHI: Did your ethnic background have any difference?

HIRONAKA: No. I only had one incident where one of the patients was really angry. So to speak, he was a good friend of mine. I was about 21. He was about 18 or 19, born in Minnesota of Norwegian extract. All of a sudden, he stopped talking to me. I thought he was not feeling well. After three or four months, he came up to me and asked if I was Japanese. I said, "I was born here as an American citizen, but I am of Japanese ancestry." He said, "If I knew you were Japanese, I really don't know what I would have done to you." But as time went on, he said, "You treat me as well or better than my own kind over here."

NOGUCHI: Oh.

HIRONAKA: He had another friend.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: So I said, "We have to treat everybody alike, not because we are Japanese, Norwegian, or German."

NOGUCHI: Yes. Did he leave before you or was he there when you left?

HIRONAKA: I don't remember, I know we both came back to Sacramento as good friends.

NOGUCHI: Yes. As good friends. That is good. Did you hear from your father, while

you were there, from camp?

HIRONAKA: Yes. My brothers and sisters also wrote to me constantly. Even some of my friends who were in camp; when the time came to volunteer, they asked me what I thought. I was not evacuated with them. I was always told by my folks, "You will always have to protect where you are living at the time, so you've got to uphold that." So I wrote to them, "If you are volunteering, it is the thing to do, regardless of what happened to us as an individual." I say we still owe our living where we are making our livelihood. So my feeling was regardless of whether we were sent to camp or not, we would have to do that to uphold our own conscience thoughts.

NOGUCHI: As the war ended, where did your family go then?

HIRONAKA: As the war ended, they came back to Sacramento in the area of Mayhew.

NOGUCHI: Yes. What did your family do when they got back?

HIRONAKA: Ah . . . well, they had to work as farm laborers and when they came back, there was nothing. I don't think they had very much money to speak of.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: The house they moved into had to be repaired, but they didn't have any money to repair the house. When they came back, my father came back, first with his grandson, Eiji. When he came to Sacramento, I was still in Weimar, still under care, so I asked for a leave of absence to help my

father and I met him in Sacramento.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

HIRONAKA: Fortunately, I had a friend who had a car. He let me use his car with all the gasoline I needed. [gasoline stamps] Then I came to Sacramento and met my father. We had two homes. One was on the leased land and the other was on the property that we owned.

NOGUCHI: You owned?

HIRONAKA: When he came back, I went to meet him. Then we went to fix the house that was on the leased land. The other one was rented out to somebody so we couldn't move into there. So we went to fix the house. We found out there wasn't one piece of lumber there.

NOGUCHI: Oh. Oh. Oh.

HIRONAKA: The house, the barn, the extra sleeping area were all gone. All the boards were gone.

NOGUCHI: Is that so?

HIRONAKA: So, we called the fellow that was taking care of the farm, Jack Lee, who used to look after these houses. We let him have a house that was on lot, rent-free, if he would look after the house for us. Just that year before, he bought a house of his own. He moved out and rented the other house. He told us he was moving out. We told him that was all right. Then with an understanding, he could keep the rent, but we wanted him to look after

our houses. Due to his schedule, he probably didn't know that the house was taken. I mean, somebody stripped the house. So when we called him, he said, "It was here when I moved out," which was a year prior, and he said, "Oh, maybe that house there has your lumber." [Laughing at the same time] You know.

NOGUCHI: [Laughter]

HIRONAKA: "In the neighbor's field," he said, "Why don't you go ask him [if he got the lumber]." I said, "No. No one could prove anything like this so we just have to let that go."

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: Then we talked to the people that were renting our home, and we had to ask them to move. They said they can't move out just like that. They didn't have any place to go, so we had to give thirty days notice for them to vacate.

NOGUCHI: Yes.

HIRONAKA: So we could move in. In the meantime, we had to wire the camp and told them not to come back, because there was no house to come home to. They said, "We are sorry, but we can't stay. They won't let us stay." So they had to move out. They had to come home.

NOGUCHI: Oh. Oh.

HIRONAKA: Then while we were looking for a house in Sacramento, we heard that

Florin Hall might be available. We went to see if we could find room there. While there, we saw smoke coming from the north of us, coming from the direction of Perkins. And my nephew, Eiji, who was with my father, he was only about twelve or thirteen at the time, I told him, "That's smoke coming over there. It doesn't look like our house, but we will find out." We had to see if the lady found the place to move so we could move in. We went to see. By golly, when we got there, it was our house.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

HIRONAKA: It burned. Nothing left.

NOGUCHI: Did the lady move out?

HIRONAKA: No, she was still there. She only saved her couch.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

HIRONAKA: I think the area was dry and the grass was dry and the wind was blowing. When we were in Perkins, I think this fire started from Power Inn Road, which was west of us. The wind was blowing from that direction and the fire hit the house before the tenant could move out with more of her belongings.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

HIRONAKA: So, we lost the house. Not only the house, but that was a two-story house, so to speak, a full basement. That basement was all full of furniture. All the furniture that you could jam into that area. Not only

our furniture, but all the neighbor's furniture who didn't have any place to store it.

NOGUCHI: So, you put other people's furniture in your home.

HIRONAKA: Right. Not only that, my father brought home close to \$1000 worth of tools. That was in the basement. We also lost those tools.

NOGUCHI: So, your father did own land prior to going into the camp then?

HIRONAKA: Right. He bought that under his nephew's name, who is from Hawaii.

NOGUCHI: Was he here?

HIRONAKA: Yes, he was here.

NOGUCHI: Was he here when your father bought the land?

HIRONAKA: Yes, he was here.

NOGUCHI: So, how old was his nephew at the time? Quite a bit older than you?

HIRONAKA: Oh, you mean my father's nephew? Yes, he was quite a bit older. In fact, I would say, he was about twenty years older than us.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. Did he stay here very long or did he go back to Hawaii?

HIRONAKA: No, he had a farm near where Aerojet is. At the time, there was Natomas Dredging Company looking for gold. He had bought the property there so the Natomas Company offered to buy him out. At the time, he had enough money for him to retire and go back to Japan. Then he went back to Japan.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

HIRONAKA: So, he sold the property and went back to Japan to retire. He was a World War I veteran. When he went back to Japan, he was collecting pension from his military duty in World War I.

NOGUCHI: Oh. Is he still alive?

HIRONAKA: No, he passed away about two years ago.

NOGUCHI: Oh. So, you got back there and found out the home was burned down like that. What did your family do after that? Did they decide to build the home on the property?

HIRONAKA: No, we were able to find a vacant home in Mayhew. It was Mr. and Mrs. Quail's ranch. We were there for a while and I guess, they went to work as laborers. Then there was an Italian farmer right next to us. They had about seventeen acres. He had to have an operation so he didn't want to farm anymore. He asked my father if he would like to farm, being that he farmed before. So they had made an agreement to go 50-50 on whatever my father raised and sold.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. Do you remember what his name was?

HIRONAKA: Boneto. Mr. Boneto.

NOGUCHI: Oh. So, how did things turn out with that kind of relationship then?

HIRONAKA: Well, I think that turned out really well.

NOGUCHI: They got the money, huh?

HIRONAKA: They didn't make too much money. Yes, I think my father was a bit

generous and had high integrity. Everything he bought, like boxes and crates, he absorbed the cost himself, saying that there were other intangibles that would offset things. But they had a great understanding between them. Actually Mr. Boneto was an Italian immigrant from Italy. He was an Italian native. It turned out really well, because after a while, two or three years working like that, he asked if we would like to keep farming. And if so, he would like to sell us the property.

NOGUCHI: Oh. Did you buy that property?

HIRONAKA: We did buy it. But, we told him that we didn't have any money. He said, "Let's not worry about the money, if you keep farming," because he had a job at the Sacramento box factory. The box factory was on 65th Street. The Sacramento box company hired lots of people from Italy and Yugoslavians. So he said that working eight hours is good enough for him. He got income from that. He really doesn't have to depend on his income from the farm or the payment from the farm. So, he said, "You just go ahead and start farming and you just pay whatever and whenever you can."

NOGUCHI: Oh.

HIRONAKA: I said, "We paid for seventeen acres of farm, with a house, barn, and the equipment." We paid \$17,000. I told him at that time, "\$17,000 is a lot of money."

NOGUCHI: Yes.

HIRONAKA: "We should get it on paper." Then he said, "Paper is not necessary," but I told him, "It is too much money involved." He asked us if we had an attorney, but we didn't have any at the time. Then he said that he could go to an Italian attorney and that probably we could too. We, myself, my father, and Mr. Boneto, went to this lawyer. We stated the case and the lawyer told me, "You seem to understand the situation. But you know, it isn't right to accept all this valuable property for \$17,000 without paying the interest." They were talking about not even paying interest. I told the lawyer, "The way they have been doing things, you don't have to worry about my father not paying interest to him." We won't say how much, but we will designate about \$1000 or maybe add a little bit more interest. And I said that part of it, I don't think you have to worry. I think if there was any thought of cheating, I don't think he would let us have it. It's all a matter of trust.

NOGUCHI: Right, right.

HIRONAKA: I said, "I am not worried about that. I will leave it up to them. They will get along really well." And so there was an agreement that we just pay the interest whenever we can. Fortunately, we paid for the property and interest in about five years.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

HIRONAKA: Did you know, one thing I would like to say is, during the time of my stay at Weimar, they built a fence around the sanitarium.

NOGUCHI: Oh, for what reason?

HIRONAKA: To keep us in there. In other words . . .

NOGUCHI: [Interrupt] Why did they do that? Was it a matter of security?

HIRONAKA: Right.

NOGUCHI: Whose idea was that? Was it the management or was it security?

HIRONAKA: No. Later on, I did find out that was from the military.

NOGUCHI: Military.

HIRONAKA: I had a pretty good idea what they were building it for. That it was being done to keep us interned just like the people in the camp. When I did see that barbed wire was being installed, I did talk to the assistant director . . . the assistant superintendent of Weimar, Dr. Lynch, who was in charge. Dr Lynch said . . .

[End Tape I, Side A]

[Begin Tape I, Side B]

HIRONAKA: “. . . the fence was built to keep people out. Protect the patients.” I said, “You better call the contractor right away, because they’re installing the barbed wire facing the wrong way.”

NOGUCHI: [Laughter]

HIRONAKA: “That it is.” I said, “If you are going to keep people from coming in, you

got to keep the barbed wire facing the other way.” He felt kind of guilty, probably because he knew what I was trying to say.

NOGUCHI: Yes.

HIRONAKA: I said, “You know what it is for, but that is not what you told me.” He said, “Well, I was going to get to that.” He said, “I want to let you know that you are going to be restricted here. That doesn’t mean that you cannot go out the gate, but you have to get permission. If you are caught outside the gate, you could be arrested.” And he said, “I want you to tell all your Japanese friends about it.” I said, “Dr. Lynch, I will tell. That portion I will tell if you want me to, but that is not my responsibility. You tell them.” I said, “If I told them, that really doesn’t mean anything, but if you tell them, your authority is there.” At that time, I did not realize we were just like internees under the War Relocation Authority.

NOGUCHI: Oh. What did exclusion feel like?

HIRONAKA: We were the same as all the Japanese in camp. I only found this out in about 1980. I found out that it was under the jurisdiction of the War Relocation Authority.

NOGUCHI: Is that right?

HIRONAKA: I found out only because of my formal complaint. I had to go back into history. One of the documentation was, “Yes, we do have Kunimi Hironaka, interned in Weimar Sanitarium under the general custody of

W.R.A.”

NOGUCHI: Oh! So, it was a military order then.

HIRONAKA: Right. Then to get permission to go out, we had to go to the Presidio in San Francisco to get permission. There were a couple of patients there who went to camp from Weimar. Those people were escorted.

NOGUCHI: Oh, they were escorted.

HIRONAKA: Yes. They were escorted by the military or F.B.I. I am not too sure, but they were escorted.

NOGUCHI: Oh, oh.

HIRONAKA: They didn't just get on the bus and go. They had to be escorted to their camp. I did ask one of the patients that was being escorted to camp, “How did they treat you?” He said, “We did get along fine [Laughter] individually.” I said, “You didn't do anything wrong.” The fellow probably wondered why you had to be escorted. “No,” he said, “I was treated really well.”

NOGUCHI: How did other patients react to that fencing at Weimar?

HIRONAKA: Well, some of the patients didn't know. In fact, I just found out recently that one of the friends that was with me . . . I said, “Well, are you going to file for your redress?” He said, “No, I wasn't in the camp. I was in Weimar. Don't you remember?” I said, “Sure. I remember.” I said, “You are entitled to it.” I asked him, “Don't you remember that

there was a fence around it?" He said, "No."

NOGUCHI: Is that so?

HIRONAKA: May have been he was four or five years younger than myself so maybe those things didn't even occur to him at that time.

NOGUCHI: Did any of your other Caucasian patients react to that fence? Did you hear anything about that fence being erected around the place?

HIRONAKA: No. I really think they knew nothing about why those fences were built around us. I think they could care less.

NOGUCHI: Oh, they could care less.

HIRONAKA: Ha, ha. I think they are more interested in their own health day to day.

NOGUCHI: Did any Japanese patients try to go over the fence?

HIRONAKA: No. I don't think so.

NOGUCHI: Nobody ever tried?

HIRONAKA: No. There was no inclination to do it.

NOGUCHI: Was there anyone who would go against you? This is something that has not been mentioned before. It is interesting. This is something nobody even knows about something like that.

HIRONAKA: I was wondering myself. Weimar is a smaller sanitarium compared to some of the ones I heard of in the Los Angeles area.

NOGUCHI: They went through the same situation as you did.

HIRONAKA: Right. I know of a person who was confined in one of the sanitariums.

NOGUCHI: Oh, oh, oh.

HIRONAKA: And I was just wondering if some of those people who were in a sanitarium are entitled to redress compensation?

NOGUCHI: Uh huh. Oh, was it what you call written notification, or was it kept in oral for the people who had to stay within the confinement?

HIRONAKA: As far as I know, it was oral because I read and know that we were under custody of W.R.A. Until 1980, I worked at McClellan when federal workers at McClellan Base were entitled to service time if they were confined in camp. At that time, I filed for service credit because I was confined in Weimar under restriction. Only I didn't have any documentation, just my verbal documentation.

NOGUCHI: It occurred how many years after that?

HIRONAKA: After five years time.

NOGUCHI: Time you were in?

HIRONAKA: Yes. 1980, but it was 1979. Actually 1980, this legislation passed. They rejected my request for service time.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: My request was denied, saying, "We didn't put you in Weimar. You were already there so you don't deserve this." So I had to appeal and kept on appealing and after five years, actually four years, in 1984, I finally had to go a hearing at a Federal building close to Cal Expo. Between Cal

Expo and Howe Avenue. I had to go sort of quick, so to speak, and presented my case. This agent came to hear my appeal. He said, "I read every letter that you sent and every reply and every appeal of your case. I have a whole stack here, so now you tell me why you think you deserve the service time." Then after I got through, he said, "You know, you haven't changed your story in the last five years." So, I said to him, "The story is true and there is no need to change." Then he approved it. So, I did get a little over three years of time. I got three years added to my 34 years of service. I got 37 years of federal civil service.

NOGUCHI: Anybody else in this area that was in the same situation as yours?

HIRONAKA: Um. . . not that I know of. I don't know whether there were some in camp like that.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. The reason I ask you whether it was verbal or written . . . if it was a written documentation, does this also apply to the Caucasian people confined under the same case? Wouldn't it be under the same jurisdiction?

HIRONAKA: No. Even if it was written, I would think it would exclude others.

NOGUCHI: They will be excluded. Was it for Japanese ancestry?

HIRONAKA: Yes, it was because of Japanese ancestry.

NOGUCHI: Because of Japanese ancestry, you came under this situation?

HIRONAKA: Yes, because of Japanese ancestry.

NOGUCHI: So, after the evacuation, you came back to Sacramento. Your dad started farming again, and what did some of your brothers and sisters do then? After they got out of camp?

HIRONAKA: My older brother, Swiss, was working in Chicago and he came back to Sacramento. I am not too sure, but around 1947 or '48.

NOGUCHI: Oh, so he went from Poston to Chicago, rather than come back to Sacramento, huh? And your sisters, they all came back?

HIRONAKA: They all came back to Sacramento, no, except my older sister. [Pause.] I guess, yes, they all came back to Sacramento.

NOGUCHI: And then Swiss and Tsuto started on the farm after they got back?

HIRONAKA: Tsuto was in the Army.

NOGUCHI: That is what you said, yes.

HIRONAKA: Yes. Swiss, my older brother started farming.

NOGUCHI: On Folsom Boulevard?

HIRONAKA: Folsom Boulevard. Right near Bradshaw.

NOGUCHI: Folsom Boulevard and Bradshaw. Then what were you doing when your brother was farming and Tsuto was in the military?

HIRONAKA: Well, when I came out in '46, I was under the State rehabilitation program.

NOGUCHI: And what is that?

HIRONAKA: Well, we made a deal. Normally, State rehabilitation will finance trade

school for nine months.

NOGUCHI: Ah, I see.

HIRONAKA: I was still under a doctor's care so I couldn't attend trade school. I asked the rehabilitation officer if he could send me to City College for the amount of money that I would receive for the trade school.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: And the full amount of money that I would receive for the trade school to two years of City College.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see now.

HIRONAKA: Four semesters of City College and he said, "We never did anything like that, but let me try." So in August '47, he said, "Kuni, I got good new for you." He said, "They did approve it." And in August '47, I was still draining pus from my side. I said, "My God, I can't go to school with this smelly pus coming out of my side." So I went to see Dr. Henry Sugiyama. I asked him if he could do something about this pus. He said that he never experienced anything like that. I had told him I had read in the, I guess, it was in the New England or English Medical Journal, about pus like the one I had. They would clean it up with peroxide and put penicillin in it. He said, "Well, oh, there is no harm in doing that."

NOGUCHI: Yes.

HIRONAKA: "Can't harm you. I don't know if it will help you or not. If it is okay,

we'll try it." I said, "Under one condition, I don't have any money and I won't be able to pay you. It will have to be on a long term basis." He said, "That is okay, a long term basis."

NOGUCHI: Yes.

HIRONAKA: The drainage had been going on since February 1942. Dr. Sugiyama did it twice. He did it at that time and a week later, he cleaned it out with peroxide and deposited penicillin. It hasn't bothered me since.

NOGUCHI: Is that so? What was it diagnosed as?

HIRONAKA: It was empyema.

NOGUCHI: Huh?

HIRONAKA: That is infected pleurisy. They call it empyema.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

HIRONAKA: From empyema, I had a rib resection. So the pus was coming from the result of empyema and the rib resection.

NOGUCHI: Oh! So, you were a very resourceful person, weren't you?

HIRONAKA: I don't know if it is a resourceful person, but more like hardheaded.

[Laughter]

NOGUCHI: To be able to prefer that we had an education program to go to college, that had to take lots of resourcefulness on your part.

HIRONAKA: Another interesting thing while I was going to school learning the electronics system through the same type of rehabilitation program. . .

HIRONAKA: Some Wilson electronics' equipment was available, like Tester, Signal, Generator, things like that. Then the rehabilitation officer said, "I have these equipments. We bought it for this other fellow. He has another job. So if you'd like to have it, we will give it to you." I said, "Sure, I 'd like to have it. How much is it going to cost?" I said, "I won't be able to pay for it right now." He said, "We will talk about that when you get to the point that you are able to pay for it. Let us know. We have to give another person the same opportunity. This is already used so by the time you get through with it, maybe it wouldn't be good. But then, whatever you could give will help the next person." He said if I could help, he will appreciate it. After I graduated, I started to work at McClellan and after six months at McClellan. . . I started to work there in 1950. . . I thought I had earned enough money to pay, so I called up the rehabilitation officer and told him that I was ready to pay so the next person will get on the program. Then he said, "You don't want to do that, do you?" I said, "I don't want to do what?" He said, "You don't want to pay for the equipment." I said, "Yes, I do. It was part of my agreement." "Yes," he said, "We did make an agreement, but nobody gave me any money yet." He said they never paid for it. I said, "I am a little different, I guess. I made the agreement so you tell me what the equipment is worth, and I will see if I have enough money to give to you." He said, "Are you sure

you want to do that?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Why don't you just keep it?" I said, "No. I will give you the money for what it is worth. I think it's about \$300. I will give you the money and you use it to the best way you can to help other people in the State rehabilitation program," and I left the money with him.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

HIRONAKA: There is no payback set up for that.

NOGUCHI: No set up to give the money back.

HIRONAKA: Maybe this is probably the reason so many students don't pay back their college education.

NOGUCHI: Student loan.

HIRONAKA: Yes, student loan. Probably there is no procedure to accepting the money back.

NOGUCHI: Yes, right. No procedure to give the money back.

HIRONAKA: In this case, they really didn't have one.

NOGUCHI: So, they didn't call on anybody?

HIRONAKA: No, they didn't call.

NOGUCHI: So, you were the first to apply?

HIRONAKA: Yes, first one.

NOGUCHI: Yes. Oh, then you finished the school there. As far as community activities, when did you start community activities? I remember,

go back a few years, you founded the club called Club '29.

HIRONAKA: Oh, Club '29. Yes. That was more or less an athletic club. There were people from Block 29 in Poston, Arizona. They wanted to stay together and play baseball and some things like that. So, we started it together. We started from that. I am glad.

NOGUCHI: Yes.

HIRONAKA: There were other things that I kind of got involved. When I went to County Hospital, I was told, "Say, Kuni, we accept you, but you will have to pay for this- -pay for staying here." I said, "Why do I have to pay for staying here? This is County Hospital. It's supposed to be free." They said, "It is free to certain people, but the people that own land, they have to pay." I said, "It doesn't make sense. We own land and pay taxes. We should be the ones to get free care here." "No," he said, "There are lots of people that have far less than you have. In fact, they have nothing. They are the ones that get the free lodging." And this happened to be in July '41 when I went to County Hospital. That was two months before my 21st birthday.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

HIRONAKA: I told this person, I guess he must have been a social worker. I said, "You know, I just got kicked out of my home two months ago. I am 21 and I don't have anything." Then he said, "You qualified and you don't

have to pay." I was under the County Welfare Department, so anything after that, I was a welfare recipient.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

HIRONAKA: Another experience I had there at County Hospital, fact is that I had pleurisy. At that time, if you had pleurisy, it was not like now. They take care of you and couple days later, you could go back to work. But the pleurisy at the time, I had wet pleurisy and the cure or recommendation from the doctor was two years or so of doing nothing.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

HIRONAKA: Couldn't do anything for two years. And we were treated just like a T.B. patient. So, I was in County Hospital for about ten weeks. During the ten weeks, we didn't get any substantial food- - no meat on the plate. But they called it nutritious. We were ambulatory then. We could see all these big meat trucks unloading beef into the kitchen. Here comes half a cow brought in, not only one, but lots of them being brought in. I said to the nurse, "You know, I have been here for ten weeks and I haven't seen any meat on my plate." Then I said, "Look over there, all these meat being brought into the kitchen.

NOGUCHI: Umm.

HIRONAKA: I said again, "We have about twenty patients in this ward and they are mostly T.B. patients. You are telling us to gain weight and get healthy.

With this type of food, I don't think they could get healthy." I said, "Is there some way of getting us better food?"

NOGUCHI: Yes.

HIRONAKA: She said, "I will call the dietician in the kitchen." I waited for about two more weeks and nothing happened. So, I wrote a letter to the superintendent of the County Hospital. Nice letter. I thought it was nice. I wrote a letter saying that we haven't had meat on the plate, not even roast beef and things like that. I think the T.B. patients should have foods that are more filling. All these patients that look underweight should gain some weight. When I wrote this letter, that afternoon, I sent it to the superintendent. The next morning the dietician came in and she wanted to know who Kuni Hironaka was.

NOGUCHI: [Laughter]

HIRONAKA: I said, "I am here." "So you are the one that wrote the nasty letter?" I said, "No. I didn't write any nasty letter." She said, "You sure did. You had your name signed on it." I said, "Then somebody forged my name because I'd never write any nasty letter." She said, "Well, it wasn't nice to do that. Why didn't you come talk to me? I am the dietician." I said, "I have asked the nurse two weeks ago. She said she talked to you, but nothing happened." The next day, I was transferred from where I was to another ward. Within a week, I was in Weimar.

NOGUCHI: Is that so?

HIRONAKA: After that, Weimar was my home. I got a letter from one of the county patients. He wrote and said that they got their first roast beef.

NOGUCHI: Is that so? You got all the quality and concern for the fellow man, huh?

HIRONAKA: Well, I like to see what is right to be done, the way it its suppose to be done.

NOGUCHI: After you got out, you went to college and then after that, you went to McClellan Field?

HIRONAKA: Yes, at McClellan Field. When I worked at McClellan Field, I was quite involved with JACL and the Equal Employment Opportunity office. The thing that I was concerned was just after the Equal Employment Opportunity program started for African Americans, Hispanics, and women. Once there a position open for 44 people. I am not sure what the name of the program was. It was for the young college people.

NOGUCHI: When was this?

HIRONAKA: I am not sure, but I would say it was late '60's.

NOGUCHI: When did you start work at McClellan Field?

HIRONAKA: I was there from 1950.

NOGUCHI: 1950.

HIRONAKA: Right after the EEO program started. There were 44 positions for the young people. Forty-four positions were filled with forty African

Americans, four Hispanics, and there were no Asians hired in that program. "Oh my gosh," I thought, "We've got to do something." At the time, Phil Hiroshima was the president of Sacramento JACL. I asked Phil, "Phil, will you appoint someone to the McClellan Air Force Base Advisory Committee? We have to communicate with the general. If you cannot find anybody, I'll be glad to do it." Being just a worker there, I could not get through to the general. I think Japanese people or Asians were not treated equally. They weren't treated right.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: So, he wrote a letter to the general on the Advisory Committee. That was probably in the late '60's. I was talking to the civilian EEO officer there about the plight of Asians and he sounded like he was very helpful. "Yes, Kuni, I agree with you. You get an Asian subcommittee to do the same thing as we are doing- the African Americans, Hispanics, and women. I agree with you." And so I thought he was really on my side. But, maybe a year or two later, I kind of mentioned to him, "When are you going to help us out?"

NOGUCHI: Yes.

HIRONAKA: Then he said, "You know, I was just thinking about that." The person in charge of EEO was a colonel in the USAF. The base EEO officer was looking for this colonel. At this time, I can't recall his name. He said,

HIRONAKA: "Would you like to talk to the colonel?" I said, "Why, sure." He said, "When?" I said, "Anytime." He said, "How about right now?" I said, "Yes, I'll talk to him right now." He said, "Where is your paper work?" I said, "I don't need any paper work. Why would I need paper work?" "I thought maybe you had something prepared." I said, "No. I just want to talk to him. You know, nothing in particular." He said, "Okay. Let me go see if he has some time available." He went into the office and came out and said, "Say, Kuni, he's willing to see you now." So I went to see the colonel. He said, "You know, I have been waiting to see someone like you to come in here and make a complaint." Then he said, "Not particularly you but somebody, some Oriental person."

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: He said, "I have proof here that you should have no complaints." I said, "I don't understand what you are saying. I didn't really come in to complain. I just wanted to talk to you." Then I said, "What is it that you have that I should be complaining about?" He said, "First, out of all the minority groups, including African Americans, Hispanics, women and even Caucasians, you have the highest average pay. You have the most awards. You have the best education. What is there to complain about?" "You know," I said, "Well, we are going to talk about that. We have the highest average pay because we are all journeymen out here. There isn't

HIRONAKA: anybody in Sacramento who can come all the way to McClellan, twenty miles up for clerical pay. You could get lots of clerical pay for secretary of State, but for the state, they are not coming out here. Therefore, we do not have any G S 3's and 4's. We are mostly journeymen mechanics and technicians in white collar work. Therefore, our average would be high. We have nothing to lower our grades. We also have a number of awards." I said, "Colonel, between you and me, what would you prefer? Would you prefer lots of awards or promotions?" He said, "Promotions, of course." He said, "You get a promotion. It will stay forever. Awards, you get at that time and you don't have anymore. It is for one time only. I'd rather have a promotion." I said, "You know, we would like to have it too. We would like to have promotions but we are not getting any. You have all these mechanics, they have a good education, you say, but we don't have any crew chief or foreman. You have good workers in the white collar field, but we don't have any supervisors." And he asked, "Is this true what he is saying?" "As far as I know, we don't have any foreman. I don't think we have any supervisor." "Well, we will have to look into that then. You know, these people have a good education and lots of awards."

[End Tape I, Side B]

[Begin Tape II, Side A]

NOGUCHI: We are in an interview with Kuni Hironaka. Can you continue with it, Kuni?

HIRONAKA: Yes. I guess we were talking about jobs at McClellan. I think I left off where we were talking about promotions- - why the Orientals didn't become foremen or supervisors. Colonel told this EEO officer too, "We should look into that." I said, "We will appreciate it. You keep looking into this, because we work hard and deserve to have somebody become a foreman or supervisor." And now, I said, "We have talked about that because my real concern is I wanted to see you because I think we at McClellan are not giving the young people, the young Orientals the opportunity to get the job that they would like to have." I said, "Because we are Asian or Oriental doesn't mean that young people are not looking for jobs. They are looking for jobs so that is the reason I am concerned. You had 44 openings here not too long ago. You didn't hire one Oriental and these are the people that are going to college. And that is the main reason I am here. I am hoping the next project of this kind or that they have an opening for that type of position, that you will consider hiring some Oriental. But maybe percentage wise, you should give more positions to Orientals this time. Then colonel asked the EEO officer, "Is it true you didn't hire any Orientals?" and he said, "I don't think we did." "Why not?" He said, "Well, I am not that sure." They took care of their

own people, not EEO [Equal Employment Opportunity] for everyone.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: For everybody.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: So since that time, we did get a full time Asian coordinator in the EEO office to look for recruits at different colleges and universities- -at Chico State, CSUS, or at any other city colleges.

NOGUCHI: Getting back to the promotions, after your conversation with the colonel, were there any promotions made? Following that conversation you had?

HIRONAKA: Since that time, there was, yes, there was. They opened up quite a bit.

NOGUCHI: At this point, you feel very good about the idea, having to go see the colonel and taking upon your own responsibility to see that changes were made. It takes a special quality that you have, Kuni, and your concern for the Asian community and Asian fellow employees. This is the tremendous tribute to you to recognize this, that you have this in the back of your mind that you wanted to do this for our fellow employees

HIRONAKA: About the things we did, it was not because we didn't trust the general or anything like that. We had a two-star general and a one-star general there. Most of the time I went to talk to the general, I did have a group with me. Some of the people, maybe you know. Carney Ouye, Frank Goi, Kenny Yee. I had about four or five with me each time that I talked to

the general, because talking to the general one on one is not going to do it.

NOGUCHI: He is going to control. . .

HIRONAKA: Yes, he is going to control. Then later on I found out, talking with a group with the one-star general, brigadier general. Sometimes the brigadier general did not present everything factual to the major general, two-star general. After that I found out there were a couple of slip-ups. We talked to the both of them. We wanted to make sure that the major general got the same words as we had given to the brigadier general. Sometimes there was a gap in between that the major general did not get the real jest of what we were asking for.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see. So there were two generals. Were they in different capacity as far as McClellan Field Goals for their objectives, then?

HIRONAKA: Oh, yes.

NOGUCHI: One was the head of the McClellan Field overall. And one was just in charge of a certain squadron or wing?

HIRONAKA: Yes, yes. Well, actually the McClellan Field, the Commander of the McClellan Field was a colonel; the generals were in charge of the Sacramento Air Logistic Center, which has the large capacity of civilian employees [over 20,000 at one time].

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

HIRONAKA: Yes. The Commander of McClellan Air Force Base was a colonel. For

Sacramento Air Logistic Center [Sacramento ALC], we had two generals.

The two generals were in charge of the logistics of the Sacramento ALC.

NOGUCHI: So, he is the executive officer?

HIRONAKA: Right. If the two-star general wants to attend an EEO meeting, he will conduct it. Some two-star generals did, others didn't. Others will send the one-star general to the EEO Advisory Committee meetings and the brigadier general would then relay the information to the two-star general. At the EEO Advisory Committee group, there were lots of civic groups like JACL. I represented JACL. NAACP was represented and the unions, different unions were there. Women's groups were there. So we had different types of people relaying their information to the general. Yes, they expressed their needs.

NOGUCHI: So McClellan Field itself was more or less the civilian portion or support group of the logistic command?

HIRONAKA: No. McClellan was actually, they were. . .

NOGUCHI: Their mission was different.

HIRONAKA: Their mission was entirely different. Yes. They were in charge of the base facilities and Sacramento ALC was one of the tenants.

NOGUCHI: Was it more like support group?

HIRONAKA: The land. They had land.

NOGUCHI: They had property there.

HIRONAKA: Yes, they had the property.

NOGUCHI: So, then Logistic Command was more like they were renting.

HIRONAKA: They were renting. They were the Air force Logistic Command at McClellan.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

HIRONAKA: In fact, Logistic Command was one of the major commands.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh. Part of SAC Air, Strategic Air Command/SAC Air Force Base.

HIRONAKA: Well, yes. The SAC was another command.

NOGUCHI: Oh, for another command.

HIRONAKA: PAC was another command. Air Logistic Center was another command. So we were part of this Logistic Center.

NOGUCHI: You still had major generals and brigadier generals controlling McClellan Field itself then.

HIRONAKA: Yes.

NOGUCHI: As far as their mission.

HIRONAKA: Yes. We were working for the Logistic Center. We weren't working for McClellan Air Force Base. That was where we went. Yes, I think it was kind of interesting because when EEO first started, there were three groups that started out- - African Americans, Spanish surnames, and . . . women. When we started making our input, the Department of Defense visited and wanted to know what this Oriental group was that was at

McClellan. The executive director of the EEO office from Washington D.C. came to Sacramento and interviewed me.

NOGUCHI: Oh, oh, oh. . .

HIRONAKA: And at that time, they found out that there were lots of conflict in just the name in saying, this is the Black group or this is the Spanish surnames. What we were discussing here at McClellan, the Defense Department came down and said, "You can't have Spanish surnames because there are lots of Filipinos with Spanish surnames."

NOGUCHI: Yes!

HIRONAKA: "And the Cubans with Spanish surnames." So they said, "Why don't you change it to Spanish speaking?" So I said, "You can't change it to Spanish speaking because I could speak a little bit of Spanish. Because it has to be either Hispanic or Spanish speaking." That is why it came out to be Hispanic.

NOGUCHI: Oh. Then you represented the JACL then?

HIRONAKA: Right.

NOGUCHI: And they were the head organization as far as your representation.

HIRONAKA: Right.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

HIRONAKA: As a civic group and then I have to give credit to the people that made JACL into a national organization. You know, we could be very proud of

the fact now that we are a national organization. Therefore, the JACL was highly respected by the McClellan AFB EEO Advisory Group.

NOGUCHI: Yes.

HIRONAKA: In a conversation with Congressman Bob Matsui, it was difficult for him to believe it possible for me to be talking to the Chief Executive Director of the EEO program in Washington D.C. Through the concerned efforts of many at McClellan AFB, the problem of EEO which existed at McClellan must have reached the office of the Chief Executive Director. He personally came to McClellan with his deputy. The two, myself, and the chief affirmative action officer at McClellan AFB had a meeting. After a detailed discussion of the problems at McClellan AFB about the Oriental employees, I believe that the Chief Executive Director of the EEO program amended the Executive Order [E.O] 11478 and the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 [Public Law 92-261] to add Asian/Pacific Islanders and the Native Americans to the existing three minority groups- -the Black, Hispanic, and women. The addition has greatly improved the promotion, hiring, and appointments of the Asian/Pacific Islanders. I'm trying to find out the names of the two gentlemen from Washington D.C., so they can be recognized by the Asian/Pacific Islander community.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

HIRONAKA: One of the things required was recognizing an Asian/Pacific Islander who was doing something for the Asian/Pacific Islanders.

NOGUCHI: Yes.

HIRONAKA: Well, the heads of the departments had to find somebody that was doing something for Asians. And they get the ball rolling, in a sense.

NOGUCHI: When did this take place?

HIRONAKA: Between, oh, I would say about the '60's.

NOGUCHI: Sixties.

HIRONAKA: Late '60's.

NOGUCHI: Late '60's. When did the Department of Defense officer head come?

HIRONAKA: He came down about the early 70's.

NOGUCHI: Early '70's. Oh, that's when changes really started to take place as far as you were concerned.

HIRONAKA: Oh, yes. Yes.

NOGUCHI: Did the Chinese have any representation from the Chinese community?

HIRONAKA: I don't think so. No, no, but I did take the Chinese with me to the meetings.

NOGUCHI: Yes.

HIRONAKA: We were kind of trying to help management, just like the "union" people. I had many people come and tell me. "Kuni," he said, "Do you know what you are doing? Isn't that detrimental to you?" I said, "I know, I

realize it is not going to help me. I have told my wife and kids. I like to represent JACL, but if I do this, I am not going to get any more promotions because it is just like a steward in the 'union.'" You are trying to help management, but the management takes on exception.

NOGUCHI: Yes.

HIRONAKA: This is what you have to do in order to make it correct. So, you are pointing out the errors. Some of the things they are not suppose to be doing, even though the regulation is telling you to do this, but they are not doing it. So, we are out there pointing it out to them. "You are not giving us a fair shake." I said, "Yes. I realize, I know. It is detrimental to me." The person said, "Do you think this is detrimental to you or helping you?" I said, "It is not helping me as far as promotions go. I have resolved myself. I explained to my wife that I will never get a promotion as long as I'm in this capacity. I tell the kids that I am not going to get a promotion. The kids are encouraged to go to college, preferably junior college and then CSUS. My chances for promotion are very remote. Then he said," Why do you want to do this?" I said, "This is something I have to do." So I said, "Well, I appreciate your concern." At least I know this and I was in grade for 20 years. Lots of people after two or three years want to get promoted. Promotion to another grade level. Anyway, the management was really good. They know how to keep you

down when they wanted to keep you down. They were good in promoting you, if they wanted to promote you. I told the person, "I appreciated his concern. This is something I have to do." My journeyman's wages is equivalent to many who are mechanics all their life. So, I should be able to make it on a journeyman's wages.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: I said, "Mechanics and laborers make a living so I should be able to on my journeyman's wages. If one gets a decent break on promotions and better jobs, I'll be satisfied."

NOGUCHI: That is tremendous. Lots of dedication, concerns for the fellow citizens. You sacrificed your own promotions to achieve this. You should be commended.

HIRONAKA: Fortunately I got promoted a couple of years before my retirement, so I am very satisfied.

NOGUCHI: What year did you retire?

HIRONAKA: '84.

NOGUCHI: '84. So you have a total of how many years at McClellan?

HIRONAKA: Thirty-four years, with three years camp [service] time.

NOGUCHI: Actually 37 years!

HIRONAKA: Yes.

NOGUCHI: But it gave you enough money to retire?

HIRONAKA: Right.

NOGUCHI: Let's talk about your family. I know you have here two boys and two girls.

HIRONAKA: Right.

NOGUCHI: Oh, so we start with the oldest one first. Who is the oldest one?

HIRONAKA: David.

NOGUCHI: David.

HIRONAKA: Uh huh.

NOGUCHI: Then?

HIRONAKA: Amy.

NOGUCHI: Then?

HIRONAKA: Arlene and Richard.

NOGUCHI: Arlene and Richard. Where are they now all living?

HIRONAKA: All live within five minutes from my home, except Amy, who lives in Hawaii, Honolulu.

NOGUCHI: You have four children- - two boys and two girls. How many grandchildren?

HIRONAKA: Three at this time. Two on the way.

NOGUCHI: What else did you participate besides. . . what did you call the working degree there? Did they give you any kind of title there?

HIRONAKA: Yes, I was. . .

NOGUCHI: Did they give you any kind of title there?

HIRONAKA: No. It was just JACL representative on McClellan Base EEO Advisory Committee.

NOGUCHI: Oh, Advisory.

HIRONAKA: I did the same thing for the County of Sacramento. In fact, I was serving under Sacramento County EEO Board for about seven or eight years and that was just prior to Brian Richter. You know Brian Richter.

NOGUCHI: Yes, I know Brian Richter.

HIRONAKA: He was on the same EEO Advisory Committee that I was on for Sacramento County.

NOGUCHI: He retired. Brian Richter.

HIRONAKA: I served that for about seven years.

NOGUCHI: You a church member?

HIRONAKA: Yes.

NOGUCHI: I heard you were involved in all kinds of activities. Can you name a few of those, Kuni?

HIRONAKA: Well, right now, latest one I joined with PG&E. They call it Consumer's Advisory Committee. They call it CAC. We did get involved on that committee to help low income families.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: Senior citizens. I think that panel was responsible to lower rates for low

income people. Fifteen percent discount under the PG&E bill. I am a member of the Bocho Doshi Kai, South Tanoshimi Kai, South Sacramento Shinwa Kai, Sacramento Nisei Bowling Association and Tsubaki Dance Club. I served as president of all mentioned organization and am the present president of Bocho Doshi Kai and South Tanoshimi Kai.

NOGUCHI: You have been secretary for the bowling league for a number of years. I think without Kuni, I don't think we would have survived many, many years of bowling both at Land Park and the bowling alley in Yolo County.

HIRONAKA: I think another of the positions I enjoyed was being the baseball commissioner for the church little leagues. We had about twelve to fifteen teams participating. The Buddhist Church had about four or five. The Methodist Church had two or three and the Parkview had one of their own.

NOGUCHI: So, you did take quite an active part for the youth.

HIRONAKA: Got the big credit.

NOGUCHI: Baseball . . . oh. Let's see, going back to JACL, what year were you, did you join JACL?

HIRONAKA: That was right after the war.

NOGUCHI: Oh, right after the war. Which one did you join? Sacramento?

HIRONAKA: Sacramento.

NOGUCHI: Oh, Sacramento JACL.

HIRONAKA: Sacramento.

NOGUCHI: And you are going to continue with this yet?

HIRONAKA: Right.

NOGUCHI: As far as other social activities, I am sure that you had quite an active roll, huh? As far as various Japanese organizations, the Brighton community, you have done quite a bit through the years.

HIRONAKA: I also helped Congressman Bob Matsui with his mailing campaign.

NOGUCHI: Campaign.

HIRONAKA: And Supervisor Illa Collin. Yes, we mailed out for or five thousand letters. Sometimes as much as ten to twelve thousand.

NOGUCHI: Did you take a pretty active part in the redress and reparation program that started back in about 1981, when I think third year law students started to get the thing on paper and [Inaudible] commission was established.

HIRONAKA: I kept abreast of it and I went to several meetings. I was all for it. In fact, I went to one of the war time commission hearings in San Francisco. I think that would help in case whenever something had to be done in Sacramento. George Matsuoka and myself. . .

NOGUCHI: You are very supportive of all the various organizations in the Japanese

community. [Inaudible]

HIRONAKA: One of my beliefs is that unless we get something strong at various organizations or whatever it is, that's going to help us. We have to support JACLs. We have to support the churches. And right now, most of them are working out successfully. Tanoshimi Kai, etc. [Inaudible]

NOGUCHI: Senior citizens.

HIRONAKA: Right now, we have close to 200 at the luncheon every Wednesday.

NOGUCHI: Yes. That is quite a few people.

HIRONAKA: Well, ours, you know, I think Riverside Tanoshimi Kai has a waiting list. They have a capacity of 150, but the South Tanoshimi Kai does not set any limit. They could sit anywhere when they come. Even at that, I didn't realize that so many people look forward to attending Wednesday.

NOGUCHI: Yes. That is what they talk about. My mother-in-law used to enjoy Tanoshimi Kai very much. She looked forward to it.

HIRONAKA: Since I found out that so many people looked forward to that, I got involved and continued on.

NOGUCHI: First thing you know, you were the new president.

HIRONAKA: Right. Ha, ha, ha. [Both laughing.]

NOGUCHI: Did you feel so included? Ha, ha. [Both laughing.] You are a good man, never unemployed.

HIRONAKA: I don't know.

NOGUCHI: They're just waiting for you to. . . [Inaudible]

HIRONAKA: That is just too bad. I didn't realize that the people look forward to those kinds of things. You know, people have cars so they could drive the car and go anyplace. When I realized that there are so many people that don't drive, they don't do anything so they just look forward to Wednesdays to get together with friends.

NOGUCHI: Yes. The word Tanoshimi means a lot to them.

HIRONAKA: That's right.

NOGUCHI: Now, I am going to ask you some questions about your children. Has this been passed on to your four children? What ever happened to your old parents? Do you talk about it?

HIRONAKA: We talk about it, but I am not too sure about whatever due to the regret that fits anything like this. We tell them this is readable, so read it. They read it. I am not too sure if they are experiencing it themselves. They really . . .

NOGUCHI: Go through one ear and comes out the other?

HIRONAKA: I don't think they are really comprehensive and understand it all.

NOGUCHI: Ha, ha, ha.

HIRONAKA: You know what I did at McClellan about the EEO, the people that got on the program? I said to the people, "You know, this is what I fought for." They said, "No, no. You didn't fight for that. You did it on your own.

You applied for it.” I said, “No, no. You had to break the barrier, then apply for it.” This was some twenty years ago. I said, “I am glad your kids are not benefiting.” As far as his kids are concerned they really don’t know what happened.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: My concerns are that my friends are not going through the program. I have a couple of good friends, real good friends, but not under the program. Several. I did talk to them, but they didn’t know what I was talking about. We told them, but once you explain something that relates to that, you know.

NOGUCHI: Yes.

HIRONAKA: I guess Rich understood. I guess some of the things that went on at McClellan. He had a job there and we rode back and forth for about three or four years. He would ask about the job at McClellan. Why this and why that. I had explained to him. He had a pretty good understanding about McClellan. What goes on at McClellan. He knows about the redress and camp. It was kind of hard for them to conceive in their mind, “What is this all about?”

NOGUCHI: Yes. You really have to explain what hardships you had to go through. Camp life. I guess there they don’t really feel what camp life was all about.

HIRONAKA: Yes. They don't feel.

NOGUCHI: Your children are aware of the fact that your last thirty years or so at McClellan, you have [Inaudible].

HIRONAKA: If it does somebody any good, that is fine.

NOGUCHI: That is the only way to look at it! Would you like to have it off or what you feel about overall? What has happened in the last seventeen years?

HIRONAKA: Well, you know that.

NOGUCHI: You accomplished an awfully lot.

HIRONAKA: That is the thing I guess.

[End Tape II, Side A]

[Begin Tape II, Side B]

HIRONAKA: One of the things that I would like to add is I happened to be one of the recipients. I already got my \$20,000 of redress money. And I know a lot of the people say that is my money now. I could spend it on whatever I want. But what I think we as individuals should like myself, out of \$20,000 put away so much for the JACL. Put away for the local JACL. The National JACL. For anybody in the congressional area. For political areas that needs help. I think we should put away maybe twenty percent and kind of help them out that way. If it weren't for them, JACL, we wouldn't even get that \$20,000. We did put lots of hard work into it. I'd like to see some of them make a better establishment for JACL. I guess

HIRONAKA: what they call Legacy Fund. And at the same time, is there some way of asking people to get this redress money? There is no way right now. No vehicle to touch each one to let them know that there is the Legacy Fund for the JACL. There is the local fund that needs help. We don't have any vehicle for that for the people that don't belong to JACL. Even if they would say, "I'd like to help JACL. What do I do?" You have too many people that do not know. I belong to JACL. But if I don't get the letter from the National JACL Headquarter to give me the form and tell me where to send it, I wouldn't know where to send it. Even the local JACL, if you had the form and got it into our hand, you could say okay. I would put the check in and send it. At least this will get some place. I know there are a lot of people on the way to get it in October 1991.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: I am quite sure that many of them that I talked to say, "That is right. We should do that." Unless we give them a vehicle to do it, to help JACL, to help the people that are responsible for all this; unless we get a vehicle to do it, they won't be able to respond. Although they can feel they like to do it. But I don't think there's going to be someone to say, "Okay, I am going to research and do it." The individual's persona is not going to let us do it.

NOGUCHI: Yes. I know because so much of that has been tossed around and

mentioned and brought up. First, we have to do is, we have to call the [?] what you just said. We have to kind of reassess the attitude of some of the people who were the recipients of the \$20,000, saying, "Hey, I was in the camp and I should be the one who deserves it." But they have to realize the fact that because of so many people who made it possible to receive that \$20,000 to the internees.

HIRONAKA: That's right.

NOGUCHI: And that was number one. How many people who are in the Japanese community, they received it and said, "Hey, this is my money. I was in camp, forget it." This is the thing you are saying that we need- - that vehicle to really get the ball rolling. And I think this is kind of a really commendable thought you have about being aware for the fact that a vehicle is needed to promote this legacy for our future generation and hopefully that someone will pick up the ball and keep this thing going. I think this is a lot. I don't think JACL is enough to get this thing going.

HIRONAKA: No, I think any old thing than this old lottery, than political thing could do. What JACL could do or not, we don't know. I think maybe the Legislative Executive committee that we had help with the redress; but I am not too sure for myself, but politically that was formed. I don't think JACL although they helped but is not the other things they could do as a non-profit JACL organization.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

HIRONAKA: And this is quite obvious. I am not too sure. Yes, but there are some ways that we could get names and addresses of the recipients. Just leave it as an option to them. You could do it if you want. It is up to you. At least let them have something that if they like to do it, it is available to do so. See! But if you don't have anything, there is nobody to write to.

[Silence]

NOGUCHI: Yes. Is there anything else you would like to add Kuni? Is there something else on your mind?

HIRONAKA: It will be just like anything else after you leave. I'll probably think a lot about it.

NOGUCHI: Ha, ha, ha.

HIRONAKA: That happens. Probably talked enough already.

NOGUCHI: No, you haven't. Ha, ha, ha. [Both laughing.] I am more than happy to share with you, Kuni. It has been very interesting interviewing you, and some of the things that you said are very enlightening. I talked to you many times, but this is the first chance I had to interview you, Kuni. It was my pleasure that I had this opportunity with you and I found out more what you have done, your thoughts, and plans. I wish to thank you from the Florin JACL Oral History Project and from Florin JACL. This will conclude the oral history between Kuni Hironaka and myself, Kinya

Noguchi. I would like to thank you once more, Kuni, for taking time out to give us this oral history interview.

HIRONAKA: Kinya Noguchi, you did a very good job of asking questions.

NOGUCHI: This concludes this interview.

[End Tape II, Side B]

ADDENDUM

This addendum was compiled from an interview on October 11, 1999 with Kuni Kunimi Hironaka at his home at 890 Royal Green Avenue, Sacramento, conducted by Christine Umeda, member of the Florin Chapter Japanese American Citizens League, Oral History Project. Kuni and Rose Hironaka and Arlene Matsuura edited the text.

Childhood Years

I was born on May 13, 1920 while my family was living in a home on the Cutter Brothers orchard. It was located on the banks of the American River presently beyond the south end of the Howe Avenue Bridge. My father was employed as a foreman. I was the fifth child of a total of eight children. The oldest was Yoshito, then twin brothers Moriyuki and Mitsuji, sister Yukiye, myself, younger brother Tsutomu, and sisters Tayeko and Teruko.

I don't remember the addresses of our homes. We moved from the orchard to another home after the Depression. Many people that had orchards went bankrupt during the depression years due to dwindling market for fruits. We were forced to move so my folks bought a home in Perkins and a small acreage near Power Inn Road. We temporarily moved to a house in Brighton Township, which consisted of a store and post office. Many years ago, this was the last Pony Express stop.

The Takeuchi family lived nearby. Mr. Takeuchi probably was one of the few Issei's who owned property. He was able to purchase land before the law forbidding land ownership by Japanese went into effect. We had no outside playmates while growing up since neighbors lived too far. We walked a mile to attend Junction Grammar School. The only time my father could give us rides was when it rained and he could not work in the fields. The grammar school had three rooms which was divided into first and second grades, third,

fourth and fifth grades, and sixth, seventh and eighth grades. We went to Kit Carson Junior High School for ninth grade, and Sacramento Senior High School for tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades. Our school consisted of Japanese, Italian and Yugoslavian families. The Japanese and Italians were mostly farmers and many of the Yugoslavian family worked in the nearby box factory. I was told there was one Caucasian family living in the area whose father was on the school board of trustees but their children attended a private school. My mother pointed out to me that it wasn't right to be making decisions for public school while sending their children to a private school.

We usually played marbles with friends. Since we lived near the river, we did a lot of fishing and shot sparrows with slingshots. We ate sparrow sukiyaki and smoked perch. Although I enjoyed eating them, I began to feel badly about killing innocent birds and soon stopped.

One bad experience on the farm was the fact that one of our friends who was just playing around with a gun accidentally fatally shot his brother. That made me wary of guns. Also another bad experience in fishing was when one of the workers invited the family to go fishing one night. Our fishing poles were just willow tree branches with our own line. While we were fishing, one of the workers lost his pole so when he waded into the water to retrieve it; he suddenly disappeared under the water. We couldn't find him. My father and a couple of the workers frantically searched for him but were unsuccessful. After about an hour or so, they gave up the search and decided to return at dawn the next morning. His body was discovered almost at the same spot where he had disappeared. After that tragedy, I no longer enjoyed fishing.

I almost drowned when I was about 10 years old. The American River nearby had a large island of about ten acres of sandy soil between the north and south banks. Between the island and the south shore, there was about fifty yards of water. A gravel company had dug for sand and gravel in that area which created a drop-off from the shallow end from about 18 inches of water down to about four or five feet. One day while playing in the shallow area, I became tired and decided to sit down not realizing I was near the drop-off. The current pushed me into deep water. I didn't know how to swim, so I began paddling and yelling for help, thinking I was going to die. Luckily, my brother Mitsuji who was in a small boat nearby heard me and rescued me. That was my first experience of almost losing my life.

When I was about 12, we were involved in a bad car accident. My oldest brother, Yoshito, was driving us home. As he was turning onto the orchard from Folsom Blvd, the car was hit on the side. After the accident I went to the house nearby to the family for help. I couldn't recall how I got there. I remember the bleeding and spitting up a lot of blood and mouthful of glass. The next day when I went to the doctor, he said my tongue was cut but if the hole had been in the middle of the tongue I probably would have bled to death. When people looked at the damage to the car, they said they couldn't believe nobody died. There were seven of us in the car and although we were all injured, thankfully, there were no fatality.

There was an abundance of family meals because my mother cooked for the workers. Carrying a child on her back and others playing on the floor, she cooked, not only for the family, but also for approximately 12 to 15 workers. The food was plentiful and consisted mostly of vegetables, fish, stew and stir fry and rice. I remember fishing for shad to cure and preserve with lots of salt, which kept for about three months. The workers were served their

meals first at our house. The table must have been at least 20 feet long with benches on both sides. The orchard company provided the room and board and the workers slept in a separate building.

The Japanese bath tub (Nihon buro) was at least 6 feet long, 4 feet deep and 3 feet wide and built high enough to accommodate a space underneath to burn wood for heating the tub water. The bottom of the tub was made of metal so a removable wooden grated shelf (sana) was inserted prior to soaking in the tub. One of my jobs was to gather the wood and keep the fire going.

School Years

We moved to Perkins from Brighton in 1933. In 1934 I started Kit Carson Junior High and the family was finally able to purchase a car. I obtained a special drivers license, which permitted me to drive only to and from school. I sat on thick cushions to enable me to see through the windshield. I was frequently stopped by the police and had to show my permit. That was the beginning of our car pool as there were other neighbors who needed rides. Although I was still in junior high school, I drove my sister and friends to high school, too.

I went to Sacramento Senior High School, which was the only public high school in Sacramento city at that time. When we were seniors, McClatchy High School opened and their first graduating class had attended 2 years at Sacramento High. We still have joint reunions and last year the 65th year reunion was held.

During the years between 1934 and 1938, when I was the chauffeur, I graduated with a perfect attendance throughout ninth to twelfth grades. Although I knew I had missed two

classes when I took a student home because of illness, it was considered an excused absence and my perfect attendance stood.

Another thing I remember about high school days. I was asked to join the Chemistry Honor Society, a club for chemistry students. For initiation into the club, we had to smell rotten eggs and go through other equally silly stunts like blindfolding and other scare tactics. Afterwards, I spoke to the sponsoring teacher and expressed my feeling that those antics are not suitable for an honor society and initiation rites should be more distinguished and cohesive for chemistry students. I was glad to see that the following year the club no longer carried on with past practices of playing tricks.

Some of the organizations I was involved in as a high school student were Nanamona, Science Honor Club, Mathematics Honor, Chemistry Honor and California Honor Society. I used to envy the Japanese students from the city proper who rode on streetcars to school. They were able to go to the library to study. My friends, Duke Takeuchi, Roy Takai and Bob Harvey and I usually sat in the car to eat and study while waiting for the others to finish their classes before heading for home.

During school hours I had to devote all my time to studying and did not have occasions to socialize with others, especially girls. When we heard about the Senior Prom a group of us had no girl friends but wanted to see what a prom was like. Three of us went as stags and were stopped at the door. It was probably unheard of at that time, but since we were seniors we were allowed to stay. We were very naïve, and so unaware that all the guys wore tuxedos and girls wore long gowns. A little embarrassing but a social learning experience for us.

I attended an after-school Japanese language class during my school years. The building was built on Mr. Takeuchi's land through the efforts of the people living in Brighton. Reading and writing were stressed. It is easy to forget if not constantly used. I only remember simple words in kanji and read hiragana and katakana characters. Japanese was primarily spoken at home until I started school. There were no kindergarten classes so I learned the alphabets and penmanship in the first grade. I was thinking about the advantages the kids have now with various programs such as Head Start, Preschool and smaller kindergarten classes being offered. However, learning takes much effort and how quickly one grasps the language depend on the individual's personality and motivation.

After High School

Upon graduating from high school, I helped on the farm with my father and brothers, as I wanted to help my younger brother attend college. After moving to Perkins in 1934 we leased five acres from a Caucasian neighbor and started raising strawberries and vegetables. The strawberries were sold through the Strawberry Growers Association and the Nojiri Strawberry Company. We had to borrow money from the Association to buy plants, fertilizers, boxes and other necessities. At the end of the season we found that instead of getting money for the strawberries, we still owed them money. The borrowing cycle began again.

When we heard that a farmers market run by the city on 9th & S Streets would allow farmers to sell their produce by paying a ten-cent tax, we decided to participate. I was 15 at that time and took on the responsibility of selling our produce. We were happy to take in three dollars for the entire day. Although there was an agreement with a nearby grocery store not to undersell us or put anything on special the local farmers were growing, that did not

continue and our sales went down. That lead to an agreement among all the local farmers to start our own farmers market elsewhere. In 1937 approximately 100 local farmers got together and negotiated to purchase a one-block property bounded by 30th and 31st Streets and S and R Streets for \$37,000. Each family involved had to purchase ten shares of stock at \$5 each, amounting to \$50 in stock of which \$5 was to be cash in order to pay for the down payment. Monthly payments were met from the rental of the stalls. When first started, a good day brought in \$5 to \$10. Three bunches of turnips sold for a nickel; a dozen for 15 cents. Rolls and doughnuts sold for a nickel or less. The Farmers Free Market operated for many years but finally closed and property was sold in 1985. Our family was involved until closing, except during the war years.

Sports Activities

During the high school years, my main recreation was baseball. Since there were many young boys and men living in the Perkins area, it was decided to organize a Perkins Young Men's Association and sponsor a baseball team. As I was asked to be the president, the initial task of raising funds was begun. We all had gloves but no other equipment. We were advised to solicit donations from every Japanese family in the area regardless of their economic standing or whether their sons will be joining the baseball team. Of course we started first with the families who were most likely to donate. We were amazed at the contributions received and were even able to purchase uniforms. The Issei's were very supportive of our efforts as they, too, loved watching baseball. They became our best Sunday boosters. In those days we didn't know about corporate donations as a possible source of fundraising as it is now. We called our baseball team the Perkins YMA and joined Sacramento Valley Rural Baseball League, which included teams from Mayhew, Taishoku,

Elk Grove, West Sacramento, Riverside, Oak Park and others. I also played on a local basketball team, which was called the Toppers.

Health Issues

The first indication of health problem was in February 1941 when I felt ill during a crucial championship basketball game with the Florin Old Timers Team. I had no energy and felt tired after playing for a short while. I thought I was tired from overwork and lack of rest. The next day was very cold and yet I felt very hot. I sneaked over to Dr. Harada's office and found I had a 105-degree temperature. He told me to go to the hospital but I told him I had to go pick up somebody after school and left. Later I called the doctor to ask when I should go to the hospital. He said, "You should be there now. Go right away." That's when I learned I had pleurisy and a case of double pneumonia. I remember overhearing the doctor telling my mother that the next 24-hour was most critical. I could hear my mother begging me not to die as she had already lost one son. (Moriyuki, a twin to Mitsuji, died at around age 5). I willed myself to get well; I must go on living.

My recovery was slow and the doctors ordered complete rest at home and not do anything for two years. That was very difficult to follow since we lived on a farm. One day he made a home visit and found me outside pulling a few weeds. He immediately ordered me to be admitted to the County Hospital. The County Hospital was quite an experience. Since I wasn't feeling very sick and the doctors were unsure where to place me, I stayed in the admittance ward for two weeks. There were many young student nurses to talk to and I took advantage of getting frequent back rubs.

City College Years

I entered Sacramento Junior College in 1947. After two years or five semesters to obtain the required 60 credits for the AA degree, I realized I took an electronic engineering course instead of a repair course and it was mostly theory and little repair. I then attended one semester at Grant Technical College in their radio repair. I was able to apply my knowledge of radio repair while being employed by the Goodwill Industries. Although I was being paid only 75 cents an hour, the hands-on experience gave me the opportunity to repair used radios for resale. I insisted on purchasing new replacements parts and not use old parts from other radios. It became a matter of principal that any radio I repaired will function well and able to honor its warranty. If I had any problems or needed advice, they were taken to the repair class at Grant Tech I was attending. The repaired radios sold well and the profits paid my wages plus for others, too.

After my release from Weimar Sanitarium, I went into the State Rehabilitation program to learn a technical trade and be able to seek employment. I received money for tuition and part of my room and board. As a welfare recipient, I received \$30 plus \$28 monthly from the County. The sum of \$900 was for short-term tuition to learn how to repair radios which later I requested an extension to two years. My State Rehabilitation Officer from Weimar was Mr. Jalibee who helped me go through the system. He was very thorough and helpful in loaning me equipment needed for radio repair. Later when I went to pay him for the use, he said since there was no mechanism for accepting money, he will use it to help other people in the rehabilitation program.

I didn't realize at the time I was admitted to the County Hospital that it was the beginning of my welfare experience. I was able to get full dental treatment and was referred to a dentist I knew. Sacramento County paid for any work done on welfare recipients so the dentists had no worries whether the patients will pay or not. The County was very selective and contracted with the most experienced and skilled dentists.

Social Life and Marriage

My friend Tom was always aware of the social happenings in the community. I went with him to local dances and events usually sponsored by a group called the Puella Societas because that's where the ladies were. This was in the late forties and early fifties. Tom introduced me to Rose Asoo at one of the functions and we started dating by going to dances and movies. Social time was limited since my family was very busy working the farm and I remained uncertain of my health.

After I started working at McClellan AFB, my health improved, and I felt stronger. I had a good job with a steady income and able to be independent. It must have been the right moment and time since Rose agreed to my marriage proposal. We agreed to get married in the Buddhist Church and it was okay by me to send any children we have to Parkview Church where Rose attended. We were married in October 1951. Although it would mean shorter commute for me if we lived closer to McClellan AFB, Rose preferred living in downtown area. Our first apartment was at 12th & Q Streets and, after the birth of our first born, David Ichiji, we moved to a large flat on 6th & O Streets.

In 1957 we were forced to relocate since the area became part of the downtown redevelopment plan. Redevelopment virtually wiped out the entire Japanese and Chinese community as homes and businesses were torn down. We, as renters, only received

compensation for moving expense. We looked for homes in various locations. One of the places we found affordable was in a subdivision in the southern section of Sacramento. The salesman frankly told us that if he were to sell to us, the price would be \$4,000 higher than the asking price simply because property value goes down in the neighborhood if a "minority" family moves in. The price became more than we could afford at that time.

It became difficult finding a place to live. Our real estate friend, Tom Furukawa said he just sold a 9 unit apartment complex with a house on Lemon Hill Avenue, and the owner had asked him to find someone to manage the units. He asked if we would consider it. We could live rent-free in the house having two bedrooms with attached garage and plenty of yard space for the children to play. The units were small but quite suitable for couples, with many rented by airmen stationed at Mather Field. We decided to take the offer and stayed for seven years.

Taking care of the apartments was a good learning experience. We were involved in interviewing tenants, cleaning the units, gardening, collecting rent and deposits, delivering mail, taking phone messages, occasional babysitting, and even as grievance mediator. Whenever anything was broken I tried to fix it myself except I'm no mechanic or plumber. I painted a lot of walls, though. Another thing I learned is the soil condition in the Lemon Hill area. The hardpan soil is so compact the water can't seep through. Although there was a large septic tank system for the apartments, the drainage was very slow and can back up which it occasionally did.

By the time we moved to Lemon Hill, we had three children, David-born in September 1952, Amy in April 1954, and Arlene in September 1957. November 11, 1959 was the day Richard was born. Rose was cooking and the children were all playing in the

yard. All of a sudden Rose said we have to go to the hospital right away. There was no time to even wash up or change clothes. I tried to stay calm and hoped we could get to the hospital in time. She was taken right away to the delivery room. I was still registering her in when a nurse came and announced, "You have a baby boy." I couldn't believe it since I didn't even have time to complete the registration. The nurse said that if my name was Hironaka, then you have a baby boy. I didn't realize birthing could be so fast. I celebrated by taking three hungry children to the hospital cafeteria.

We moved from Lemon Hill and bought a house in 1964 on Milford Street in the Willow Rancho area. The elementary school was very close. At first we were hesitant about joining the PTA group and didn't know what would be expected of us. Slowly we began to participate and help with school activities, which the children attended. I began to realize that PTA was an organization not for a select few but the willingness to help and get involved was welcomed and gladly accepted. It was a good way to meet other neighborhood parents.

When Richie joined the neighborhood Cub Scout pack, I was asked to take care of the transportation needs for all scout activities. I was to contact parents and ask when they can take their turn providing the rides. I was told this was one of the most difficult tasks because some parents will not help with transportation, which was unfair to others who did. When I contacted each parent, I found that the ones who refused to help had very legitimate reasons. I asked if they could participate in some other way such as providing snacks, help organize an activity or make telephone contacts. They were willing to do so. I learned that there are some things that can't be done equally. Collectively, in the overall program, each person did their fair share but not in the same capacity.

When David and his friend Yuki wanted to join the little league, they were too late for try outs and the teams were already picked. When I inquired, I found that one team did not have enough players so both David and Yuki were allowed to join. With no previous little league experience this team was thought to be pushovers. They both played well as pitcher and outfielder and almost won the championship. Both David and Rich played several years for the Willow Rancho Little League.

We moved to our present home in 1989. I remember it was the year that the earthquake hit in the bay area during the baseball world series. Our house on Milford Street was difficult to sell as real estate value in that area was dropping. and we sold it less than our asking price. We are contented living here and enjoy a more serene neighborhood.

When our children were attending Sunday school at Parkview Presbyterian Church, I served on the Stewardship Committee, which mainly is responsible for building maintenance and upgrading and financial management of the church and personnel. I was glad to help out. However, when I was asked if I would serve as chairperson, I could not since baptized member of the church can only fill that position. I helped in other ways, such as the church bazaar raffle committee chair. I initiated giving complimentary raffle tickets whenever organizations were asked for a donation because it shows our appreciation. I felt it was just good public relations as it served as advertisement and they in turn came to the bazaar.

McClellan and EEO Activities

I started working at McClellan AFB in 1950. It became apparent to me that in order to get promoted to a higher level such as foreman, one had to belong to a certain fraternal organization whose membership required a sponsorship. I sought transfer out of Maintenance to a job in Materials Management. Promotions came slowly. I felt I was still

being passed over when an opening for a promotion became available. I had to remind myself that I'm working for the federal government and determined to put my best effort to each assignment. Surely my ability to complete special projects in a timely manner would be rewarded. I continued to submit applications for any job I felt qualified and looked promising.

One day a friend asked if I was still interested in becoming an industrial engineer technician as I showed a high math score in the federal entrance exam. My supervisor then promised he would help me get a promotion in the present job, but that just sounded like hollow words again. My previous application for the job was still active, so as soon my supervisor reluctantly signed the release form, I was able to transfer immediately.

From then on, whenever an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) matter came up, I managed to become involved. In early 1970's a Federal Executive Order document (number known) regarding EEO was issued. It contained a broad statement that other groups were included but named only the three--the Blacks, Hispanics (Spanish surname) and Women. "Other groups" were not specifically named. Under the provisions there was one paragraph that said the provision is to be applied by regional location. I felt that Asians have as much right to equal employment opportunity if statistics and percentages are to be based on geographical area. At that time, the Asian population in Sacramento County was much more than the Blacks and about equal with Hispanics. Most of the government agencies recognized the three groups mentioned but not Asians or any other. minority groups.

Under EEO, the federal government didn't necessarily go by the statistics of the percentage of people or population but with the best qualified. I had meetings with the General at McClellan Air Force Base urging him to recognize the regional provision to help

qualified Asians get promotions. I volunteered to serve as chairman of the advisory group for Orientals (later changed to Asian Pacific Islanders) Advisory groups were already formed for the Blacks, Hispanics and Women. We needed recognition as a group. Asian Pacific Islander week was organized and tempting food and Asian culture was showcased. Many people volunteered to help and supported the EEO concept.

I was able to accomplish more during my tenure as EEO Chief. Before I retired, all EEO positions were being phased out and being combined with other duties in Personnel. I still continue to be involved as an EEO representative at McClellan from the Sacramento JACL. I last went to a meeting over a year ago and was surprised how many people were still working there. Reports are still being made on the personnel actions processed, but it mainly focused on complaints and adverse actions.

Retirement Years

Upon retiring in 1984, I decided to get more involved in the organizations to which I belonged. One was the Bocho Doshi Kai, a club for people who came from Yamaguchi Prefecture in Japan. Our immigrant parents, of course, started this organization, but we continue to carry on the traditions. I first was on the Board of Directors and about two years later elected as President and have been for over 10 years. The club celebrated its 85th anniversary in 1997.

I have served as President of the South Sacramento Shinwa Kai. This is a fraternal club for families primarily living in the southern area of Sacramento. Many activities throughout the year are held for the enjoyment of adults and children.

Tanoshimi Kai was started in 1985, a year after I retired. This is a senior nutrition lunch program sponsored by the Federal Agency on Aging. I began to attend regularly on

Wednesdays since I offered rides to several elderly people, including my father-in-law. I was elected as president of this group and am serving for almost 15 years, which includes being a Project Council representative.

Not long after I retired, my first grandchild, Derek was born. When his other grandmother who babysat him became ill, I pitched in to help since Rose was still working. I guess Derek was an exceptionally easy child to care for—smart, contented and happy. I learned a lot about baby's needs and it was a fun time for both of us. He was no trouble at all.

Two grandsons, Bryson and Landon, were born in Hawaii. They moved back to Sacramento about six years ago and lived with us for a while. Then there are Tori, Sara, Breanne and Makaela to make it seven grandchildren. Grandma began family get-togethers every Friday night and cooked dinner. But when the children started to become involved in activities such as Boy and Girl Scouts plus numerous sports participation, get-togethers became hectic and infrequent. We try for Sunday dinners, but many times grandma and grandpa are busy with their own commitments.

We cherish our grandchildren. I never knew my grandparents because they lived in Japan. I was just wondering if I love and enjoy my grandchildren this much, how much my grandparents missed out by not knowing theirs.

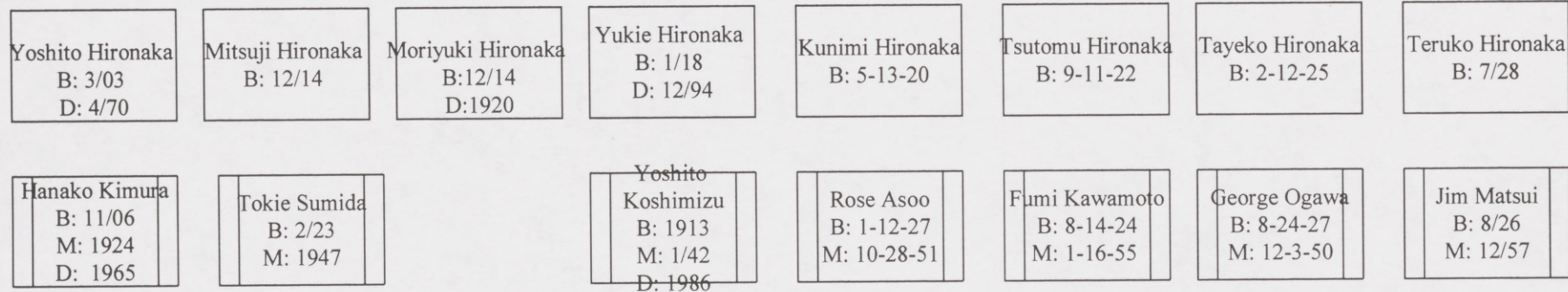
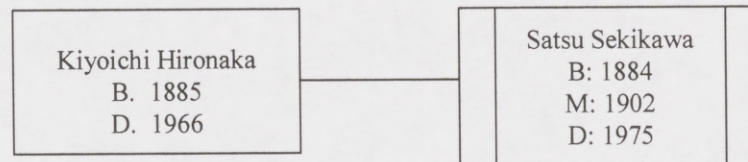
Legacy

What are some of my guiding principles? My feeling is regardless of what you do, you have to do the basic things correctly and make sure the foundation is sound. Have integrity, be honest, trust others and have faith in your own ability. Help others wherever you can without directly expecting anything in return.

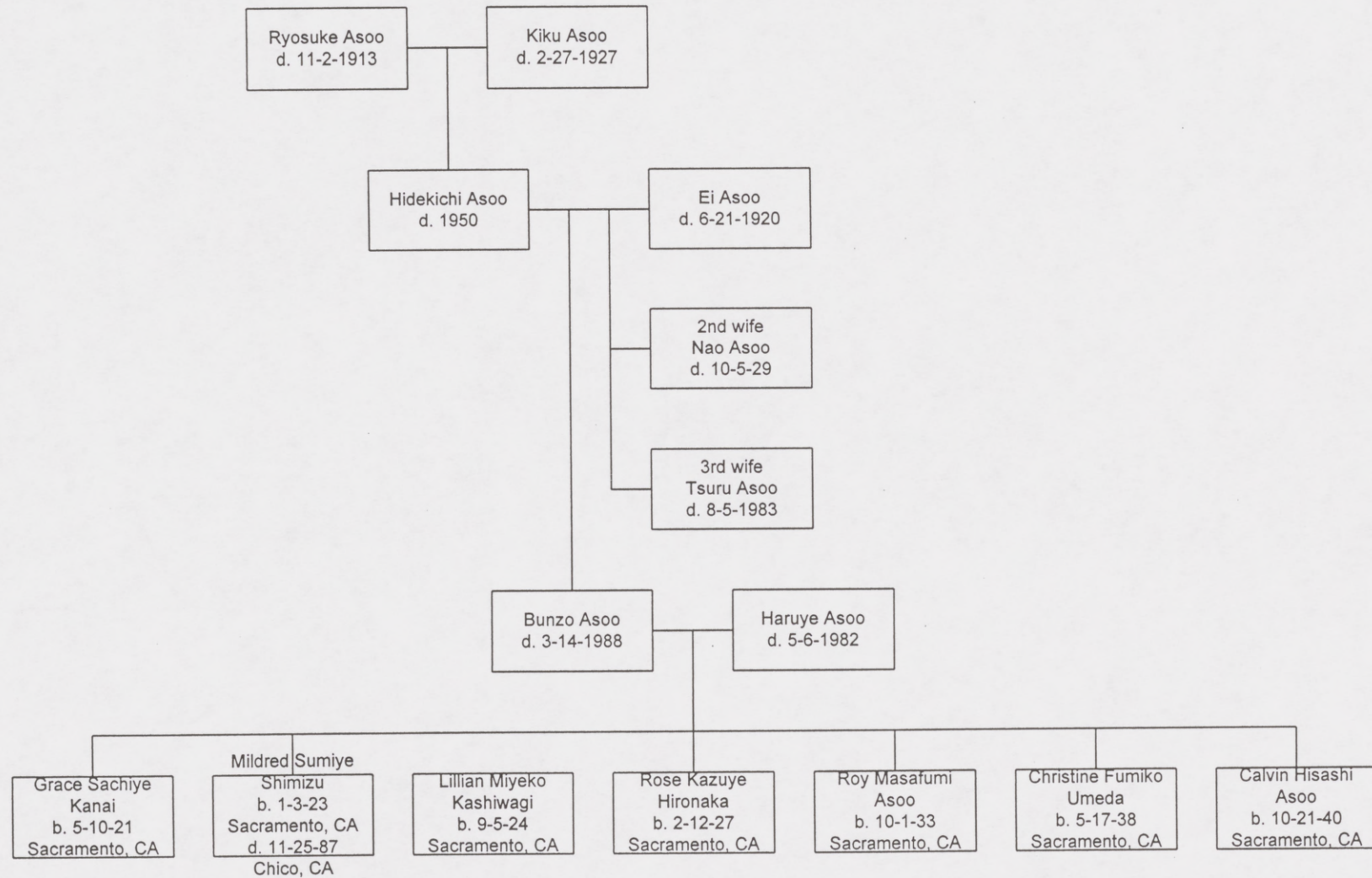
APPENDIX

1. Kiyoichi Hironaka Family Tree – January 2000
2. Asoo Family Tree – 2000
3. Kuni Hironaka Family Tree – January 2000
4. Map of Brighton-Perkins-Mayhew-Taishoku-Florin, May 1942
5. Sacramento Senior High School, The Review of 1938 (6 pages)
6. October 1979, Department of the Air Force letter to Kuni Hironaka – recipient of Air Force Equal Employment Opportunity Award (2 pages)
7. Sacramento Bee article April 11, 1980, regarding Kuni Hironaka's receipt of the Air Force Equal Employment Opportunity Award
8. November 1994, Japanese American Citizens League, Sacramento Chapter, 1994 Honoree, Kuni Hironaka (2 pages)
9. 1998 85th Anniversary of Bocho Doshi Kai, President Kuni Hironaka (5 pages)
10. Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition, 1995, presented by Congressman Robert T. Matsui

**KIYOICHI
HIRONAKA
FAMILY TREE**
January 2000

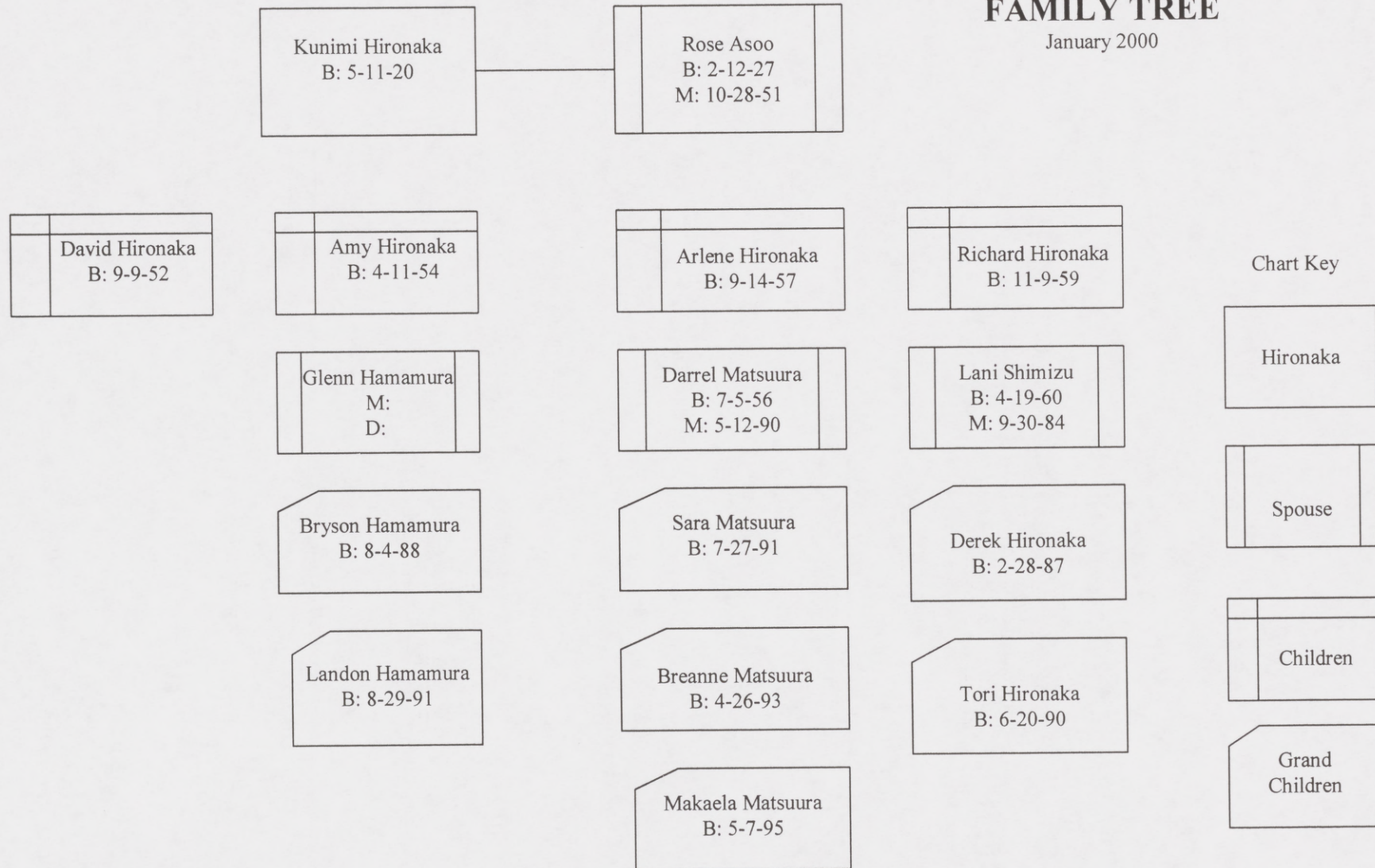


THE ASOO FAMILY TREE



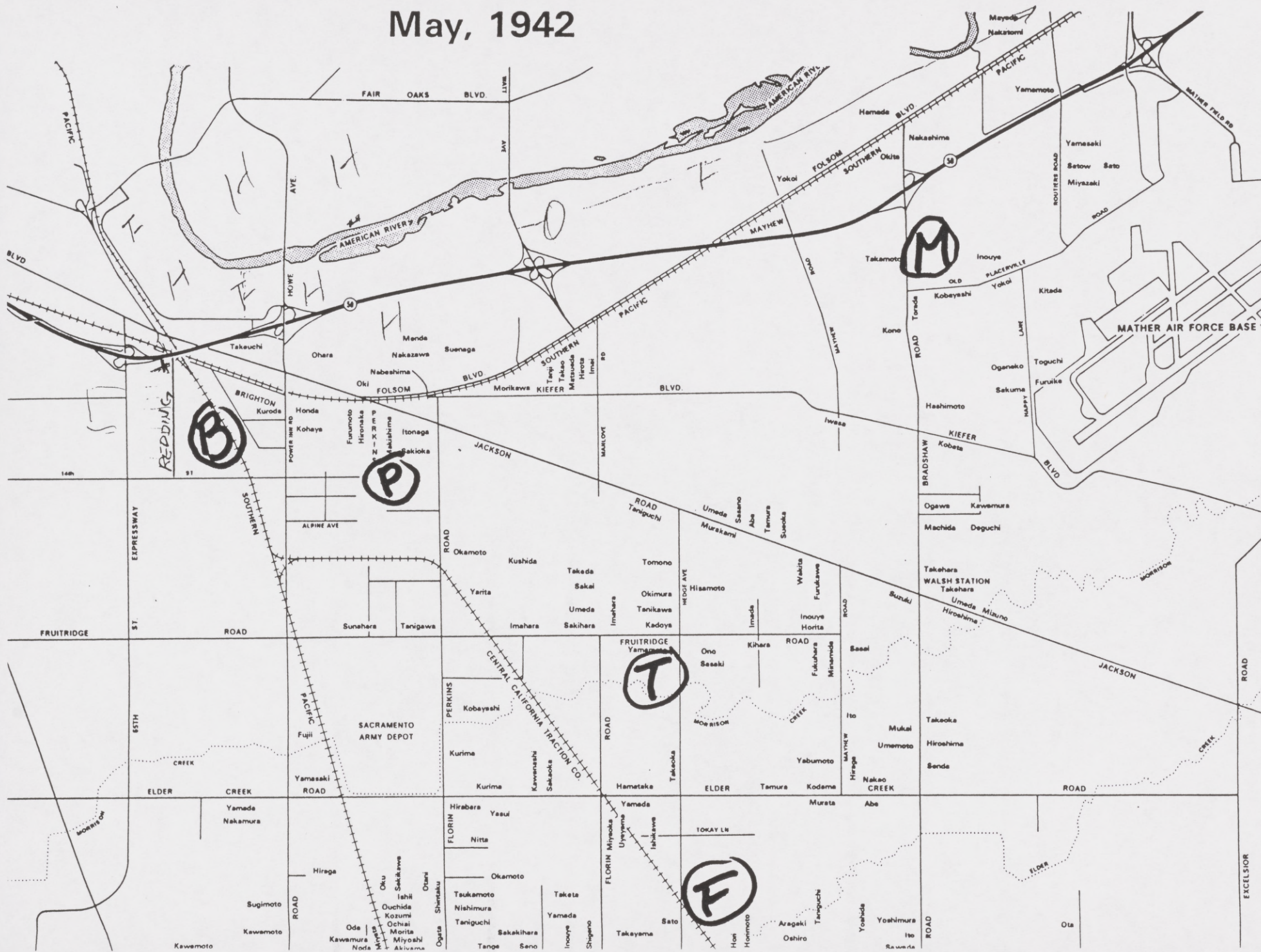
KUNI HIRONAKA FAMILY TREE

January 2000



BRIGHTON-PERKINS-MAYHEW-TAISHOKU-FLORIN

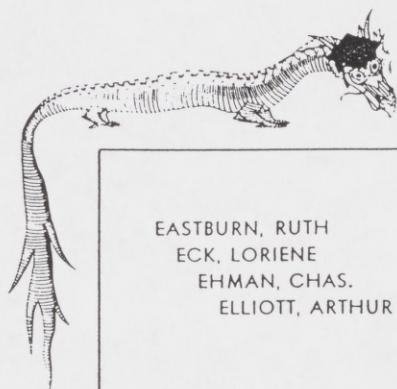
May, 1942



THE
REVIEW
OF
1938



PUBLISHED BY THE
ASSOCIATED STUDENTS
OF
SACRAMENTO SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



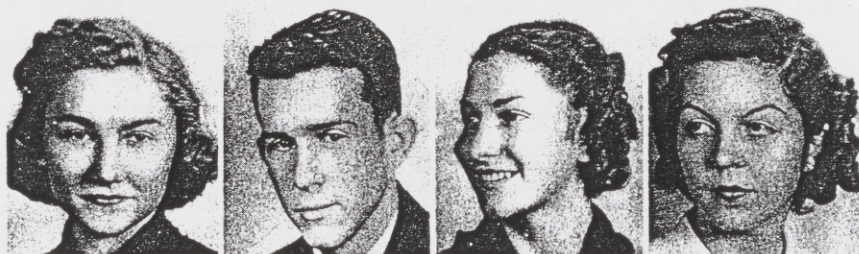
EASTBURN, RUTH
ECK, LORIE
EHMAN, CHAS.
ELLIOTT, ARTHUR



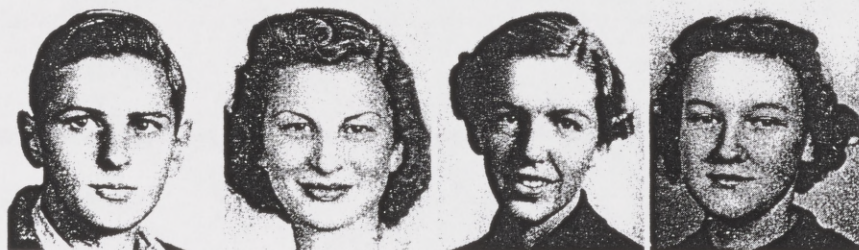
EPLING, CLARENCE
ERHARDT, ROBERTA
ERICKSON, JANE
EYER, ELAINE



FACKENTHALL, BILL
FONG, EDWARD
FOSTER, CAROLYN
FUJIYE, KANEO



FULMER, MARY ENA
GAUNT, JACK
GIANECCHINI, BRUNA
GREGSON, DALE



GURLEY, JACK
HAMPSHIRE, GERALDINE
HANSEN, MARY
HARRIS, BERTHA



HARVEY, KENNETH
HAWORTH, JEANNE
HEFT, MILDRED
HIRONAKA, KUNIMI

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CLASS OF JANUARY, 1938

GIANNECCHINI, BRUNA
Dance Concert.

GREGSON, DALE
High Sophomore, High Junior Councils; Girls' Stagette Committee; Girls' League; X-Ray Staff.

GURLEY, JACK
German Honor; President, Low Sophomore, High Sophomore Class; Tennis Team; Sports Editor, X-Ray.

HAMPSHIRE, GERALDINE
International Club.

HANSEN, MARY
Nana Moma; High Senior Council.

HARRIS, BERTHA
Art Club.

HARVEY, KENNETH
High Senior Council; String Quartet; Assistant Conductor, Junior Orchestra; Concert Master, Senior Orchestra.

HAWORTH, JEANNE
Scholarship; French Honor; International Club; Class Councils; Editor, X-Ray; Low Senior Paper.

HIRONAKA, KUNIMI
Nana Moma; Mathematics Honor; Chemistry Honor; Scholarship.

HIRSCH, ALFRED
"A" Basketball; "B" Basketball; "A" Swimming Team; Block "S."

HITCHCOCK, EDWINA
Senior Play.

HOLCOMB, ROBERT
Chemistry Honor; Scholarship; Low Junior Council; Curator, Nana Moma Museum; "B" Track; "B" Football.

HOLDENER, JOE
Mathematics Honor; German Honor; "A" Basketball.

HOLMAN, ELON
Nana Moma; Peppers; Senior Play; Nana Moma Museum.

HOLME, PAUL
"B" Basketball; X-Ray Staff.

HOLTGEN, MARIE-LOUISE
Merrie Mounted Club.

HOOPER, DOUGLAS
Camera Club; Block "S"; "B" Football; "A" Football.

HOSOKAWA, YUKIKO
Mathematics Honor.

HOUSTON, BETH
High Senior Council; Girls' League.

HURTZIG, CLAIRE
Merrie Mounted; Class Council; Dance Concert.

INOUE, WILLIAM
Scholarship; Mathematics Honor; German Honor; Chemistry Honor; Nana Moma.

ITANO, HARVEY
Scholarship; Math. Honor; Secretary, Chemistry Honor; President, German Honor; High Senior Class Council; Chemistry Team.

JACKSON, BETTY
French Honor; A'Cappella Choir; Pepperettes; President, Secretary, Golf Club.

JEFFERS, BARBARA
Nana Moma; G.A.A.; International Club; Golf Club; Golf Award.

JOHNSON, CLAYTON
Sergeant-at-arms, Gavel Club; Peppers; "B" Football; Editor, R.O.T.C. Column; Major, R.O.T.C.

JOHNSON, VERNON
Mathematics Honor.

JOSEPH, MARY
"Tri-Y"; Cooperative Student; Dance Concert.

KALLEN, BERNICE
Nana Moma; International; Scholarship; Secretary, Low Senior Class; Low Senior Class Council.

KASHI, CHIYOKO
Home Economics; Japanese Club.

KENNEDY, DOUGLAS
President, Pnyx; Vice-President, German Honor; Chemistry Honor; Nana Moma; Block "S"; "A" Basketball; "A" Football.

KING, GAIL
President, Nana Moma; Treasurer, Math. Honor; Treasurer, International Club; German Honor; Class Council; Treasurer, Low Sophomore, High Sophomore Class; Chairman, Civic Service; Photography Editor, Review.

KING, MARY
Treasurer, Home Economics; Nana Moma; Vice-President, "Tri-Y."

KINNEY, PATRICIA
Pnyx; Class Editor, Review; Dance Concert.

KITAZUMI, ARDENE
Nana Moma; Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Japanese Students' Club.

KNICKERBOCKER, EDGAR
Agora Club; Gavel Club; Peppers.

KURODA, YUKIKO
Scholarship; Japanese Students' Club.

KWOK, JOHN
Scholarship; Advertising; Commencement Speaker.

LARSON, BETTY LOU
Nana Moma; Home Economics Club.

LOHEIT, MYRTLE
Camera Club; International Club; High Sophomore, High Senior Class Council.

LORENZ, ILA
Home Economics Club.

LOUIE, HENRY
Chinese Students' Club; Scholarship; Math. Honor; Chemistry Honor; German Honor; Chemistry Team.

MALERBI, DORA
Attendance Office Staff.

MARREN, MARY
Civic Service; Attendance Office Staff.

MARSHALL, WARD
Vice-President, Camera Club; Thespians; Low Junior, High Junior Class Council; Student Body Secretary; Peppers; Junior Play; Senior Play; Photography Editor of Review; Secretary.

MATHIASSEN, JOHN
Key Club; High Sophomore Class Council; President, High Junior Home Room.

MATSUO, SHIZUKO
Japanese Students' Club; Home Economics Club.

MAYEDA, HELEN
German Honor; Music Honor.

McAFEE, GLADYCE
Nana Moma; Music Honor; Secretary, Low Junior Home Room; A'Cappella Choir.

MERZ, CLAUDINE
President, Home Economics Club; Low Junior Council.

MICOTTO, NORMA
After School Sports; G.A.A. Emblem.

MURRAY, DE LONG
Taediferi; Nuntius; Art Club; Chess Club; Camera Club; Central Election Committee.



MATHEMATICS HONOR SOCIETY

FALL SEMESTER	OFFICERS	SPRING SEMESTER
HAL COOPER	President	GORDON SEVERANCE
DARLENE KUMLE	Vice-President	AVIS GRACE FISHBACK
AVIS GRACE FISHBACK	Secretary	ANNETTE DIXON
GAIL KING	Treasurer	JAMES FLICKINGER

ALTHA B. CROWLEY, Sponsor



CALIFORNIA SCHOLARSHIP FEDERATION

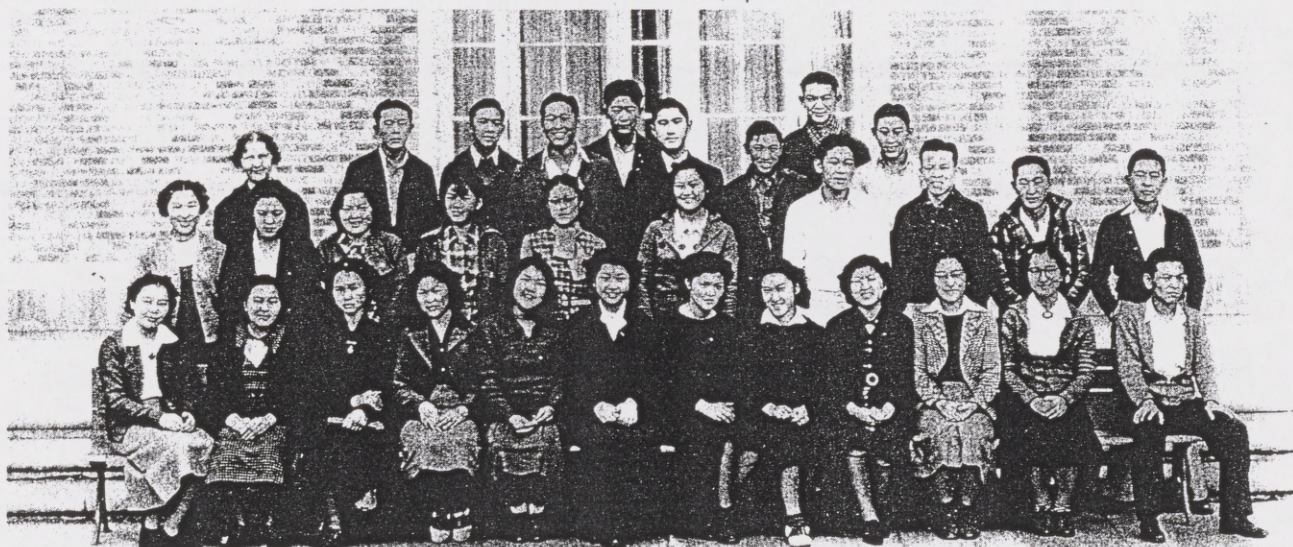
FALL SEMESTER	OFFICERS	SPRING SEMESTER
ARTHUR WEINBERGER	President	GORDON SEVERANCE
GORDON SEVERANCE	Vice-President	EDGAR FICKENSCHER
JACK DOYLE	Secretary	JAMES FLICKINGER
WILLIAM STONE	Treasurer	DON McKAY

HAROLD KIMBALL, Sponsor



NANA MOMA

FALL SEMESTER	OFFICERS	SPRING SEMESTER
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BOB MURPHY.....	Vice-President.....	REX TOWNSEND
MASIE DITNOCK.....	Secretary.....	SALLY MUNSEN
ROBERT SOOST.....	Treasurer.....	BOB MURPHY
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FALL SEMESTER	OFFICERS	SPRING SEMESTER
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KUNI NAKAO.....	Boys' Vice-President.....	JACK OKUDA
AYA NISHMURA.....	Girls' Vice-President.....	YURI MATSUDA
YURI MATSUDA.....	Secretary.....	ELSIE NAGASAWA
MAY SEITZ, Sponsor		



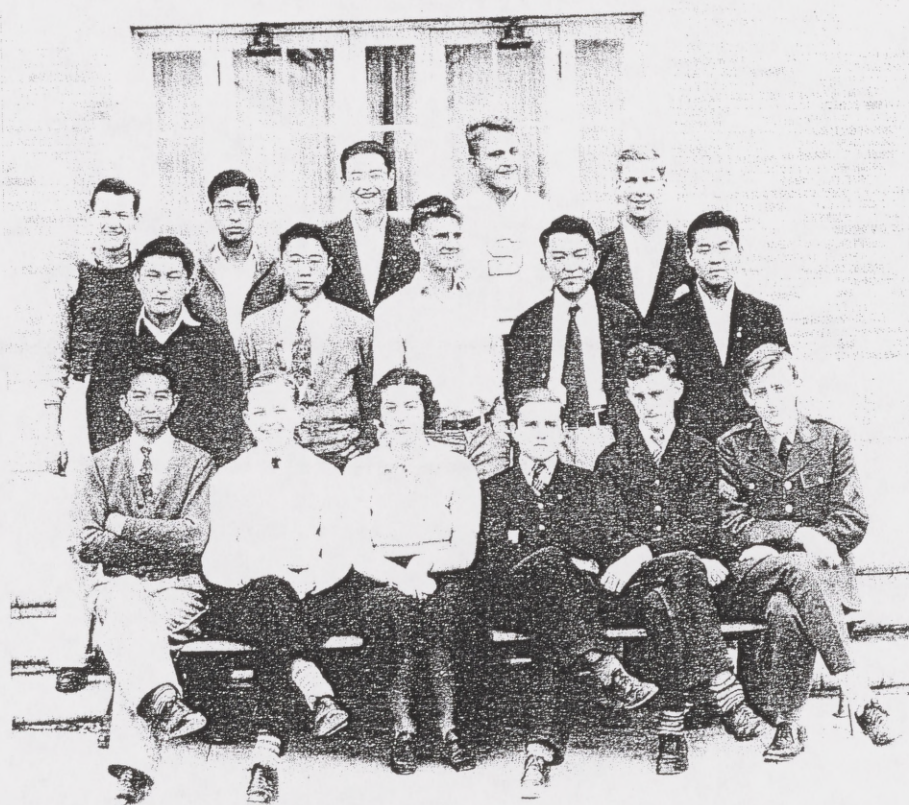
PNYX CLUB

FALL SEMESTER

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JOHN POLLOCK.....Vice-President
ELSIE WOODEN.....Secretary
LARRY CAMPBELL.....Treasurer

SPRING SEMESTER

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CAL SETZER.....Vice-President
MARGARET MOAK.....Secretary
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FALL SEMESTER

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EDGAR FICKENSCHER
Vice-President
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CECIL BISHOP.....Secretary
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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON 20330

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

26 October 1979

Mr. Kuni Hironaka
Directorate of Materiel Management
Sacramento Air Logistics Center
McClellan Air Force Base, California 95652

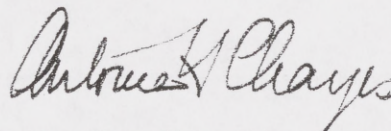
Dear Mr. Hironaka:

Congratulations on your selection as the recipient of the Air Force Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Award in the area of the Oriental Employment Program.

I am particularly gratified by your high level of commitment and personal involvement in the total EEO Program. In your capacity as a collateral duty Oriental Employment Program Manager, you have been successful in establishing liaisons between the Oriental community and McClellan Air Force Base, furnishing Asian organizations lists of employment opportunities and developing the program for Asian American Week. These efforts clearly demonstrate your commitment and dedication to the Air Force EEO Program.

In recognition of your outstanding contributions, I am pleased to present you with a plaque and accompanying citation. Again, my congratulations and personal thanks!

Sincerely,



Antonia Handler Chayes

- 2 Attachments
1. Plaque
2. Citation

DISTINGUISHED EEO



Award
of the Year 1979

ORIENTAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Mr. Kuni Hironaka

Director, Equal Employment Opportunity

Oriental program award given to McClellan man

MCCLELLAN'S KUNI HIRONAKA was honored last Friday in ceremonies at the Officers' Club when Mrs. Gail Berry West, deputy for Equal Employment Opportunity, Secretary of the Air Force, presented him with the Oriental Employment Program Award.

A McClellan employee since 1950 and presently assigned as a production management specialist in the Item Management Division, Materiel Management, Hironaka was cited for his active support of the Asian/Pacific American persons at McClellan.

IN 1970 HIRONAKA recognized the fact that the large number of Asian employees at the base were not properly represented in the Equal Employment Opportunity Program. His persistent efforts brought about the organization, in 1976, of an Asian Advisory Subcommittee to assist the EEO Advisory Committee.

He served actively on the subcommittee as a chartered member during its formative years and is still an advisor. This committee was the first and still the only one of its kind in the Air Force.

ONE OF THE MAJOR accomplishments of the subcommittee over the last several years has been the annual celebration of Asian-Pacific American Week. It has grown from a small observance among its members to a major McClellan event, serving as a means to educate all personnel about the Asian cultural heritages.

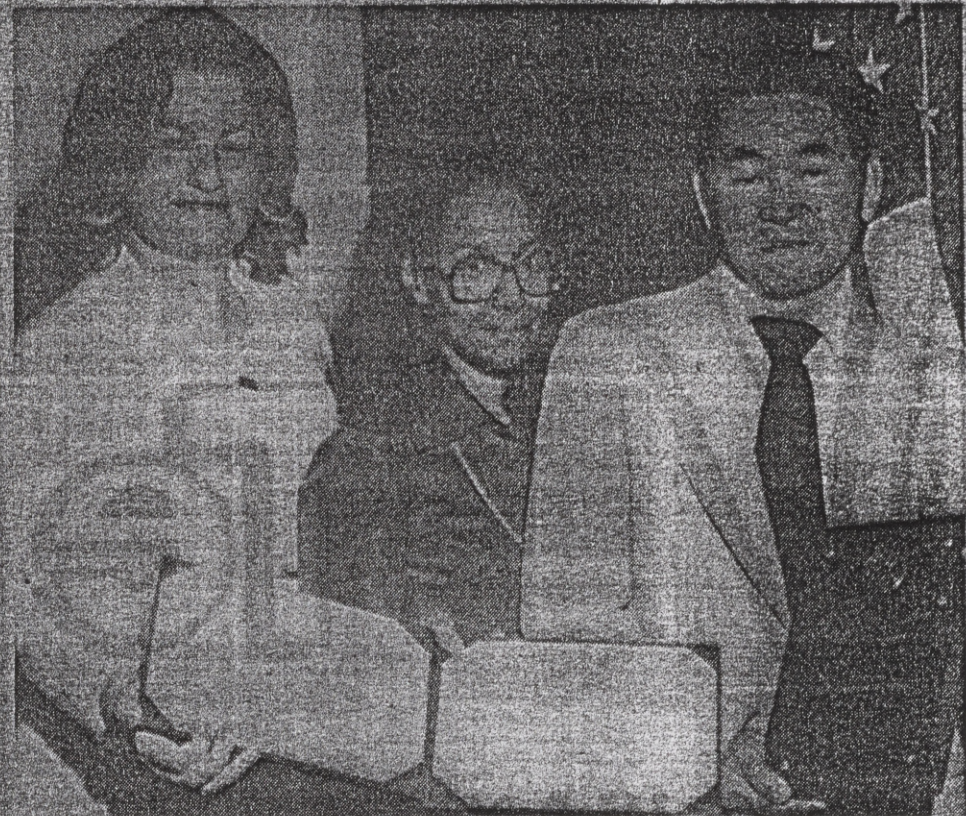
Hironaka has also worked in the area of community outreach, insuring that Asian-

Americans in the Sacramento area are more aware of Federal job opportunities. He has served with the U.S. Civil Service Commission in its recruitment programs at universities, colleges and high schools in Northern California.

THE AWARDEE is a member of the Sacramento Japanese American Citizens League, where he was assigned to the committee for Internment Credit. In this function, he represented Americans of Japanese ancestry who were interned in the United States during World War II. This committee's efforts resulted in the passage of Public Law 85-382, which allows Civil Service credit for any period an employee or retiree was interned or otherwise detained after reaching 18 years of age.

Working in the community, Hironaka has worked with the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, serving on its Personnel Advisory Committee, a citizens group which monitors the county's personnel policies and procedures.

THE CEREMONY at which Hironaka was presented his award was also attended by Mrs. Joy Bishop, chief of Equal Employment Opportunity, Headquarters USAF, Maj. Gen. Dewey K.K. Lowe, ALO commander, Roger Hackney, field representative for Congressman Robert Matsui, Dave Takashima, president of the Japanese American Citizens League, base EEO specialists, members of the Asian Pacific American Subcommittees, a number of base employees who are Asian-Americans, family, and friends.



U.S. Air Force photo

Efforts honored

Kuni Hironaka, right, holds the award he received last Friday, citing his efforts on behalf of Asian Pacific Americans at McClellan. Presenting him the Oriental Employment Program Award was Mrs. Gail Berry West, center, deputy for Equal Employment Opportunity, Secretary of the Air Force; and Mrs. Joy Bishop, chief of EEO, Headquarters USAF.

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE
Sacramento Chapter

INSTALLATION OF 1994 OFFICERS

and

SACRAMENTO COMMUNITY RECOGNITION DINNER

1994 Honorees

KUNI HIRONAKA
PRISCILLA OUCHIDA
JACK TSUCHIDA
MARY TSUKAMOTO
HON. PATRICK JOHNSTON
NISEI POST 8985 VFW

Corporate Sponsors

EAST LAWN, INC.
SACRAMENTO CABLE
UNION BANK

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1994



Kuni Hironaka was born on May 13, 1920 in Brighton (Sacramento County). He was educated in local schools through high school. He received an AA in electronics from Sacramento Junior College and was certified in radio repair from Grant Tech College.

He has been an active member of the Sacramento JACL for over four decades. Kuni has served on the board of directors of the Sacramento Nisei Bowling Association since 1945 and was on the executive committee for two National Nisei Bowling Tourneys.

He has served on the board of South Sacramento Shinwa Kai for 45 years and was president for more than 10 years. Bocho Doshi Kai (Yamaguchi Kenjin Kai) elected Kuni as its president in 1986, a post he currently holds.

South Tanoshimi Kai, a senior nutrition program, has had Kuni as president from 1985 to the present. This group of seniors numbers 250 oldtimers and meets weekly. He also serves on the Project Council Board of Senior Nutrition Service.

He is a charter member of Nisei In Retirement. He has been appointed to serve on the Consumer Advisory Board for PG&E. Kuni is a past president of the Tsubaki Dance Club. He is also an active member of Parkview Presbyterian Church.

He worked at McClellan AFB for 37 years. During the early seventies, when the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Program started, those who were of Asian descent were excluded as a minority group. Realizing that this lack of recognition placed Asians at a disadvantage in employment and advancement, Kuni became an activist. In the mid-seventies, he was appointed to the McClellan AFB EEO Advisory Board as a representative of the Sacramento JACL. Shortly thereafter, he was sought out by the Executive Director of EEO Program from the Department of Defense.

After detailed discussions of concentration of the Asian population, the Director of DOD assured the Asian Pacific Islander and Native American groups that they would be added to the EEO minority slate. He also assured that this same action would be taken in all branches of the Federal Government. This significant action assured fair treatment for all Asian Pacific Islanders in all aspects of Federal employment throughout the country, benefiting thousands of Asians in Federal employment.

During the period 1982-83, Kuni served on the Affirmative Action Committee for the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors. He also served on the Committee For Internment Credit. This group's efforts resulted in the passage of Public Law 85-382, which allowed Federal Civil Service Credit for any period a Federal employee or retiree was interned or otherwise detained.

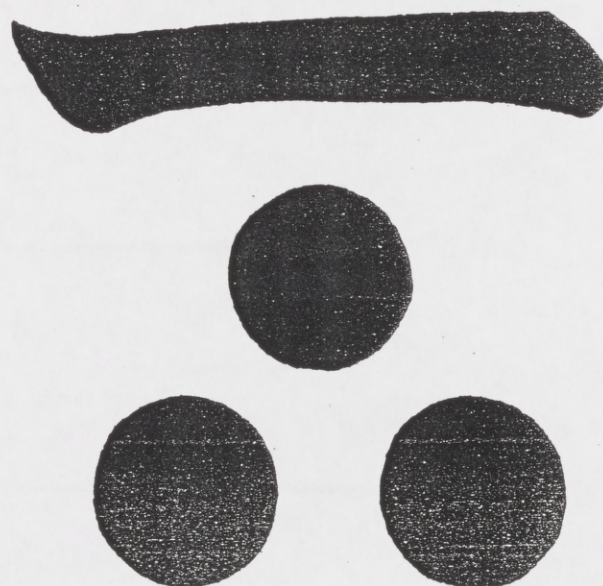
He is married to Rose (Asoo). They have children David, Amy, Arlene (Matsuura), Richard and 6 grandchildren.

85th
1912 ANNIVERSARY 1997

創立八十五周年記念祝賀会

SACRAMENTO BOCHO DOSHI KAI

桜府防長同志会



THE LORD MOORI CREST

RADISSON HOTEL
SACRAMENTO CALIFORNIA
JANUARY 18, 1998



Dear members, guests and friends;

Hi everyone -- Happy New Year and thanks for helping us with our 1998 Bocho Doshi Kai's New Year celebration along with our 85th Anniversary.

It is with deep appreciation that we are able to celebrate this occasion in tribute to the foresight of the pioneer Isseis from Yamaguchi Ken. Due to the needs of time, recently, activities such as sponsoring golf and bowling tournaments have been held; but the original purpose to provide a common bond and support to our members and families, as well as the community as a whole, have not changed.

It is with great confidence and pride that I foresee the continuance of this invaluable heritage and tradition started by our pioneer Isseis. With the involvement and dedication of the Niseis, Sanseis and Yonseis, etc., and the continued support and assistance provided by persons who were educated in Japan, the Bocho Doshi Kai will continue to be a viable organization in this community.

I greatly appreciate the support of the officers and members of Bocho Doshi Kai, other organizations and individuals.

Minasan, orei moshiagemasu. Do-mo arigato gozai mashita.

Thanks again, everyone. Keep healthy and continue your good work.

Sincerely,

Kuni Hironaka
President, Bocho Doshi Kai

PROGRAM

BOCHO DOSHI KAI
1998 NEW YEAR'S PARTY/85th ANNIVERSARY

Master of Ceremony - Opening Message	MC Paul Takehara
Shikuga No Shi Ginbu	(GIN) Nishio Kokuryu (MAI) Mayumi Hamakawa
Introduction of Officers	Yoshinari Tanaka
Message	President Kuni Hironaka
Introduction of Guests	Ray Iwamoto
Introduction of New Members	MC Takehara
Message from Sekinari Nii, Prefectural Governor of Yamaguchi Ken, Japan	Ken Okimura
Message from Congressman Robert T. Matsui	Reiko Kawakami
Keiro Kinen Presentation	President Hironaka, assisted by Shig Shimazu and Committee
Shaji - Representing Recipients	George Hiromoto
Closing Message	MC Takehara
Introduction of Steve Outa Entertainment Chairman	MC Takehara
Message	Steve Outa
Toast (Kampai)	Masanao Okamoto
Shokuzen Gassho	Reverend Seicho Asahi Koyasan Buddhist Temple

DINNER

Door Prizes	Shig Shimazu
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ENTERTAINMENT

Shikuga No Mai	Vicki Chiao
Shutsu En Kyoku Moku	MC Kazuko Sofuye

BOCHO DOSHI KAI OFFICERS FOR 1998

President	Kuni Hironaka
1 st Vice President	Paul Takehara
2 nd Vice President	Ken Okimura
Vice President - Lodi District	Pat Morihata
Vice President - Placer District	George Hoshida
Treasurer	Harry Kashiwada
Auditor #1	Ken Okimura
Auditor #2	Satoru Shimazu
Auditor #3	Kay Hamamoto
Secretary (Japanese)	Ray Iwamoto
Secretary (English)	Shig Shimazu
Komon	Masanao Okamoto
Komon	Shigemi Ikemoto
Sodan Yaku	Masao Nishio
Entertainment Chairman	Steven Outa
Fishing Derby Chairman	Lester Matsumoto
Golf Tournament Chairman	Stan Yamasaki/Roy Higashino
Bowling Tournament Chairman	Stan Yamasaki/Wataru Tsugawa

1998 RIJI MEMBERS (BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

Doioka, Takashi	Kawano, James	Outa, Steven
Fuchigami, Yoshio	Makishima, Ben	Shimada, Kiyoshi
Hamamoto, Kiyoshi	Makishima, Joe	Shimazu, Glen
Hashimoto, Katsumi	Matsumoto, Larry	Shimazu, Shig
Hashimoto, Masateru	Matsumoto, Lester	Shimizu, George
Higashino, Roy	Miura, Shoji	Shirai, Makoto
Hironaka, Kuni	Morinaga, Lincoln	Sumida, Roy
Hironaka, Mitsuji	Morihata, Pat	Takehara, Paul
Hoshida, George	Nakamura, George	Tamano, Haruo
Ikemoto, Kanji	Nakashima, Eddie	Tanaka, Takashi
Ikemoto, Shigemi	Nakagawa, Soji	Tanaka, Yoshinari
Ioka, Eiichi	Nishio, Masao	Tateishi, Stanley
Iwamoto, Ray	Okamoto, Masanao	Tsugawa, Wataru
Kaita, Noboru	Okamoto, Melvin	Tsukamoto, Yoshio
Kashiwada, Harry	Okihara, Tom	Yamachika, Tom
Kawahata, Harry	Okimura, Ken	Yamasaki, Stanley
Kawamura, Harry		

THE HISTORY OF SACRAMENTO BOCHO DOSHI KAI

The Yamaguchi Ken Jin Kai, the Bocho Doshi Kai's antecedent, was first established in Sacramento, the Year of Taisho Gwan Nen, (1912), the ceremony was held the following year. The first chairman was Sadahichi Tanimoto, owner of Tanimoto Company on 3rd and L Sts. corner, and the secretary general was Soichi Nakatani, (employee of the Bank of Japan in Sacramento) who came from Shimada, Kumage-Gun.

At that time, there were 150 members and was the fourth largest organization next to Hiroshima, Wakayama and Kumamoto, showing the power of San-Jyu-Roku Man Goku, (360,000 goku of rice production annually.) Tayama, Ohshima-Ya, and Iwakuni-Ya, the hotels (boarding houses) were the gathering places for the friends from the same Ken. They were mostly store owners and farmers.

Around 1918, the Bocho Goh-Yu Kai was established at Iwakuni-Ya, then located at "D" Street. The first chairman was Mr. Kihei Ikeda from Tokuyama and their primary purpose was to deepen their friendship and encourage savings.

Around 1925, the Kai-Gai Kyo-Kai (overseas association) was established in each Ken, its purpose was to act as contact point and exchange information between the immigrants overseas and their homeland. At that time, the two organizations mentioned above merged and became Bocho Kai-Gai Kyo-Kai, Sacramento Branch Office. Mr. Hidesuke Yoshinaga became the first secretary general and exerted much effort to the operation and development of the association. A publication issued at that time regarding the history and development of Bocho Kai-Gai Kyo-Kai, Sacramento Branch, contained the list of all members including the personal history of the individual, photo, which city/town they came from. It was a beautiful commemorative publication.

When World War II broke out in 1942, 110,000 Japanese people living on the coast of Pacific Ocean were forced to move to eleven designated locations east of the Sierras. All the Kai-Gai Kyo-Kais were forced to dissolve since its retention in concentration camps was a violation of one of the eleven paragraphs of the Enemy Act.

In the Spring of 1946, Bocho Doshi Dai was the first to reorganize in Sacramento with Mr. Soichi Nakatani as chairman, Mr. Masao Ioka as secretary general, and Mr. Mitsuo Fujimoto as treasurer. During their ten years in office, variety of trees--metasekiya, red cedar, white pine, eucalyptus, Oregon pine, etc.--were sent for landscaping mountains and fields of their homeland, Yamaguchi Ken. Also, seeds of various vegetables, flower, etc., were donated for three consecutive years to Yamaguchi State Office.

When Mr. Taro Ozawa, the Governor of Yamaguchi, visited Sacramento during a trip to South and North America, he advised that the seeds they received were carefully tended and grown at their agricultural laboratory and sent to other cities and villages. Great appreciation was expressed.

The primary purpose of the Bocho Doshi Kai is to deepen friendship and help each other during ceremonial occasions, funeral services, etc. At present, the Issei members are gradually declining; fortunately, the Nisei and Sansei members are increasing. For the past several years, the New Year's parties had over 300 members getting together and enjoying a good time laughing about "choru", "so-de-gozari-masu", and "nonja." The Niseis, Sanseis and Yonseis are becoming oriented to these Yamaguchi terms.



*Certificate of Special
Congressional Recognition*

Presented to

Kuni Hironaka

April 4, 1995

DATE

Robert I. Matsui

MEMBER OF CONGRESS